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Elijah Chetwyned
1843

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THE
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OR
FEEBLE CHRISTIAN'S SUPPORT.

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THE
GOSPEL STANDARD,
OR,
FEEBLE CHRISTIAN'S SUPPORT.

"Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness; for they shall be filled."—Matt. v. 6.

"Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began."—2 Tim. i. 9.

"The election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded."—Rom. xi. 7.

"If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest.—And they went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch; and he baptized him.—In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost."—Acts viii. 37, 38; Matt. xxviii. 19.

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ADDRESS TO OUR READERS.

The principles of the *GOSPEL STANDARD*, and the motives by which we are actuated in conducting it, we have not now for the first time to lay before our Readers. They have been repeatedly declared in our *Addresses*, and, we trust, embodied in our pages. How far indeed our professions and our practice have agreed, and how far each month has redeemed the pledge given at the commencement of the year, we will not attempt to decide. Self-love too often blinds the eyes of parents to the defects of their offspring; and it may be that we are unfit judges of our own work. And yet, though self-love may partially blind us, so far as we may possess any measure of spiritual discernment, or any tenderness of conscience, we shall perceive and feel the sin and infirmity that is mingled with this work of our hands, as with every other thing that proceeds from us.

But it is needful that our readers should bear in mind, that the conducting of the *Gospel Standard* necessarily comprehends two distinct branches—each requiring far more wisdom and grace than we are possessed of. These two distinct branches are, 1. Examining, deciding upon the insertion, and subsequently revising the communications of our correspondents; and 2. Our own *Reviews* of books sent to us for that purpose, and occasional answers to *Inquiries*.

Of these two distinct branches we need hardly say that we consider the first the most important, and the proper province of the *Gospel Standard*. The latter is of secondary importance, and, as it were, subsidiary to the former. A few words on each of these branches may be desirable, and we desire to speak them in simplicity and truth.

One great defect then, as it strikes us, in the communications, is *the want of Original Pieces*. Our readers must have observed that our pages are generally filled with letters. These indeed are a most valuable medium of communicating gospel truth; and their very freedom, and the absence in the writer of any idea of publication, give them an ease and a reality which more formal pieces rarely possess. Indeed, were we compelled to make our choice between our publication consisting wholly of pieces, or wholly of letters, we should at once, and without hesitation, prefer the latter. But there are many interesting and profitable subjects which letters do not usually touch upon, they being chiefly private correspondence, which we think might be handled in pieces with much advantage.

Not indeed that pieces are not sent us for insertion. Far from it. We receive such frequently, but they rarely satisfy us. A dryness and deadness, a coldness and formality usually characterize them. They do not appear to gush freely from the heart as the "well of water that springs up into everlasting life." The writer does not seem to "speak that he may be refreshed;" (Job xxxii. 20;) nor "his heart," like David's, to be "*bubbling up* a good matter." (Ps. xlv. 1, margin.) Barrenness, therefore, and death are the consequence.

But there are other pieces sent us for insertion which are written with such a measure of simplicity and feeling as would induce us to lay them before our readers, but from want of clearness in thought, or expressiveness in language, they are beyond measure confused, tedious, and wearisome. Pieces that combine simplicity and feeling with clearness, conciseness, and strength, are what we want for our pages. Learning or eloquence, flowery language or well-turned periods, we want not. But originality, truth, power, unction, clearness of judgment, perspicuity of expression, and a heavenly warmth running through the whole, all tending to enlighten the mind, touch the heart, move the conscience, fire the affections, and quicken the obedience of the reader—these, or rather a measure of these invaluable and almost indispensable qualities we wish to see in pieces marked for insertion in our Periodical.

Of the *letters* with which we have chiefly filled our pages we need say but little. But for our work, many letters full of sweetness and power (the names of the writers we need not particularize) would, humanly speaking, have been lost to the church of God. They would have been confined to the individual to whom they were addressed, or to a small circle of his personal friends. But through the medium of our pages they have become widely read by the living family; and how many drooping spirits they have cheered, how many cast down they have comforted, how many ignorant they have instructed, how many falling hands they have lifted up, or feeble knees have strengthened, may not be known till that day when the secrets of all hearts shall be disclosed. In this point we consider the chief if not the only value of the *Gospel Standard* lies. Our Reviews may have been carnal, defective, prejudiced, partial, violent, prolix, or full of such faults as our friends may deplore, or our enemies condemn; and all through our conducting our periodical the clearest traces of weakness and incompetency may have been visible; and yet it cannot be denied that there have appeared from time to time in our pages letters on which the dew of heaven has rested, and which have been blessed to many souls.

And now a few words with respect to that part of our labours which may be called more peculiarly our own, and which, if attended with peculiar responsibility, is also attended with peculiar invidiousness; we mean our Reviews, and Answers to the inquiries of correspondents.

Feeling, as we do, that every thing that passes from our hands is tainted with the sin and infirmity of the creature, we willingly acknowledge the defects and imperfection of our Reviews. Our design in writing them is to aim at the glory of God and the edification of the church. But we find that we are not sufficient for these things, and that sin and self will intrude, and mingle themselves with this, as with every other work of our hands. Nor do we usually perceive how large a share those twin associates have had in our work until the printing press has indelibly stamped it upon paper, and the first of the month has witnessed it in the hands of our readers.

Yet, though conscious of their many defects, we would claim for them two things, or rather we would *claim* one thing, and *disclaim* another.

1. We would claim, then, *impartiality* in our expressed opinion of the works submitted to us for review. Our discernment

may be denied. We may have blamed the good and approved of the bad, acquitted the guilty and condemned the righteous. Or we may have laid too much stress upon unimportant points, and with needless criticism may have found fault with incidental expressions, and dwelt too much upon an author's style and other mere verbal matters, without paying sufficient attention to his general drift and intentions. In these and other points we may have erred, and shall probably err again. But so far as our *intention* is concerned we have not erred willingly. *Impartiality*, however, we trust we may claim; and this the more earnestly, as it has been at the risk of wounding highly-esteemed friends, which we would most gladly have avoided could we have done so, and still preserved our impartiality.

2. But as we lay a claim to the attempt at impartiality, so must we *disclaim* any setting up of ourselves in our passing a judgment upon the works of others. Because a man may pronounce a judgment upon a work, it does not thence follow that he could himself write as good a one. Many a hearer will pass a sound judgment upon a sermon, who, were he in the preacher's place, might not be able to stammer forth one of five minutes' duration. So we might be very unable to write as well, or handle things as experimentally as some whose works we review, and yet be able to form some judgment upon them. We must positively disclaim any such assumption as that we constitute ourselves superior to those whom we may review. On the contrary, we often feel, painfully feel, our inferiority; and were it our persuasion that, in reviewing the works of others, we thereby constituted ourselves their superiors, we would never touch a pen in that department of our work again.

But it is time to draw to a close. We cannot, then, make any promises for the future that we will reform all that is amiss, and perfect all that is lacking. We are unprofitable servants, and never expect to be otherwise. We are ignorant and helpless, and can do nothing aright unless the Lord work in us to will and to do of his good pleasure. But we purpose, with his help, and in his strength, still to go on issuing our monthly publication, and we call upon our spiritual friends to render us their aid, either by furnishing us with experimental pieces of their own composition, or by favouring us with such spiritual letters as may fall into their hands, and by the perusal of which they think that the church may be edified, and the Three-One God glorified.

THE BLESSEDNESS OF WAITING AT WISDOM'S GATES. A SERMON.

"Blessed is the man that heareth me; watching daily at my gates; waiting at the posts of my doors."—Prov. viii. 34.

In "the Scriptures of truth" no more than two classes of people are declared to be in the world. The one class is called "the blessed of the Lord," and the other, "the cursed of the Lord," or "the people of God's curse." This latter class contains all the "vessels of wrath fitted to destruction;" all "the generation that are pure in their own eyes, and yet are not washed from their filthiness;" all the "generation of vipers that cannot escape the damnation of hell;" and, in short, all "whose names are not written in the Lamb's book of life," who are not among those whom Jesus has "redeemed unto God out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation." The former class, to which the characters spoken of in the text belong, contains all who are "chosen by God the Father in Christ before the foundation of the world, that they should be holy and without blame before him in love;" all whom he "predestinated to the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will; to the praise of the glory of his grace; wherein he hath made them accepted in the Beloved; in whom they have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace;" (Eph. i. 3—7;) all whom the Lord the Spirit "quickens into spiritual and eternal life;" (Eph. ii. 1;) and all to whom Jehovah says, "I have loved thee with an everlasting love, and therefore with loving-kindness have I drawn thee." (Jer. xxxi. 3.)

Of both these classes, or of the characters which make up these two distinct families, the Holy Ghost has given in his word plain and striking descriptions. He has drawn their likenesses with his divine and unerring hand, and has clearly separated the sheep from the goats, "the chaff from the wheat," and "the precious from the vile."

In the text we have exhibited to us the portrait of a blessed character, an heir of God, and a joint heir with Christ. His features are drawn from the life by the Spirit of life with the pencil of divine truth, and happy are we if we can trace any of these features in the fleshy tables of our hearts, and discover any conformity to the image of Jesus in our souls. May it be our happiness to feel that we are of "the blessed of the Lord," while attending to the description of the blessed man of whom Wisdom speaks. May "the light of life" shine upon the word, and shine into our heart, that although we may only see through a glass darkly, we may be enabled to hear the still small voice of the Lord saying to our souls, "Unto you is the word (and power) of this salvation sent."

"Blessed is the man that heareth me, watching daily at my gates, waiting at the posts of my doors."

I. The first thing to be attended to in endeavouring to enter into these words, is to understand *who is the speaker*. By the context we find that it is one whose name is "Wisdom;" one who is holy,

omniscient, omnipotent, and eternal; one who was "before all things, and by whom all things consist;" who, from everlasting, "from the beginning, or ever the earth was, was with the Lord, as one brought up by him; who was daily his delight, rejoicing always before him, rejoicing in the habitable parts of his earth, and having his delights with, or his affections set upon, the sons of men." In short, the speaker in my text is clearly the same with him of whom it is written, "Unto us a Child is born; unto us a Son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder; and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace." (Isa. ix. 6.) "Christ, the power of God and the wisdom of God unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks." (1 Cor. i. 24.) Now this divine, almighty, and all-wise Person is the promised Prophet of whom Moses wrote—Jehovah the Redeemer, who teaches those whom he calls to profit, and leads them in the way wherein they should go. He is here exhibited to us as a wise and affectionate mother, in which character he was well known to his people, (Isa. xlix. 15; lxvi. 13,) giving instruction to her children, and encouraging them to "patient continuance in well-doing." I shall therefore, throughout this discourse, use the personal pronoun feminine, when referring to Immanuel Jesus, who says to all the elect family, "Hearken unto me, ye children; for blessed are they that keep my ways. Hear instruction and be wise, and refuse it not. Blessed is the man that heareth me, watching daily at my gates, waiting at the posts of my doors."

By none but those who esteem themselves to be "fools" and "simple ones" is the teaching of Wisdom really valued. The wise and prudent of this world, the self-sufficient pharisee, the self-made pietist, the unhumiliated professor of the gospel, and the hardened Antinomian, agree in despising and counting it as a thing of nought. But Wisdom makes all her blessed children to know and feel their great need of her divine instruction; she causes them to hear her voice, and to turn at her reproof; she pours out her Spirit unto them, and makes known to them her words; (Prov. i. 23;) the entrance (or opening) of which giveth light and understanding to the simple. (Ps. cxix. 130.) But does Wisdom speak with an audible voice? Can the ears of the body catch the sound, and the natural understanding comprehend her words? No! Wisdom's voice is audible only to the new creature, which hears it in the impressions that she makes upon the heart, and in the mysterious leadings of her providence. It is "with the heart man believeth unto righteousness, and with the mouth maketh confession unto salvation." "When thou saidst, Seek ye my face, *my heart said* unto thee, Thy face, Lord, will I seek." But when may a man be said to have heard the voice of Wisdom? When does he give evidence of having received her divine impressions, her heavenly and powerful operations, through the Spirit, in his heart? When a man is made to feel that he is in the hand of the holy, just, and sin-avenging Jehovah, against whom he has sinned; when his transgressions and iniquities are set before him in the light of God's countenance; when he feels himself to be

justly condemned, by the law which he has broken, to the second death, and to the endurance of the wrath of God for ever and ever; when the depravity, deceitfulness, and desperate wickedness of his heart is discovered to him, and he is led to cry in the bitterness of his soul, "Woe is me, for I am undone; for I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips; for mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of Hosts;" when, like the leper, he covers his lip, and goes forth crying, "Unclean, unclean," and putteth his mouth in the dust, if so be there may be hope; when, like Hezekiah, he turns his face to the wall, and weeps sore in secret before the Lord; when a sense of his darkness, ignorance, impotency, and unprofitableness makes him cry, "O Lord, I am oppressed, undertake for me;" when he finds all human cisterns to be broken, and that vain is the help of man; when he feels that he is shut up and cannot come forth; when a strong conviction of the ability of Jesus to save and heal him is in his heart, and he cries unto him to deliver him from going down to the pit; when nothing short of the Lord the Spirit's application of the love, blood, and righteousness of Jesus to his heart and conscience will satisfy him; and the Spirit of grace and supplication is poured out upon him, enabling him to pour out his soul before God, to acknowledge the iniquity of his transgression, to sue for mercy, to beg for pardon, teaching, wisdom, light, and power, and to crave for one smile, one look of love, one word from Jesus's lips more than for his necessary food. I say, when he has experienced these things, he has heard more than the voice of natural conscience; more than the word of man; more than the letter of the oracles of truth. He has heard the voice of the Lord, which is powerful and full of majesty, that breaketh the cedars in Lebanon, and maketh the hinds to calve. As one who was dead and in his grave, he has heard the voice of the Son of God, and has been quickened or made alive by him. (John v. 25.) He has heard the words of Wisdom; her voice has sounded in his soul, and has produced this wonderful change; and to him do these words now apply, "The ear that heareth the reproof of wisdom shall abide among the wise." Happy, saith wisdom, is the man that is in such a state; yea, "blessed is the man that heareth me."

Again. When he that has climbed in over the wall, that has taken up a profession of religion without feeling its power, whose religion has hitherto been "feeding upon ashes," and who has never known the strait gate and narrow way, is awakened by the solemn feeling that "that which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit, and that except a man be born from above he cannot see or enter into the kingdom of God;" when the sluggard awakens from his slumber, and the man that was asleep upon the top of the mast has his eyes opened to see his danger, and his heart and mouth opened to implore assistance; when the Spirit Jehovah has blown upon the grass, and all its glory withers away; when natural knowledge of divine truth, formal prayer, mock spirituality, feigned love, and presumptuous confidence become "a heap and desperate sorrow;" when, examining himself whether he be in

the faith, and trying himself by the test of God's word, his faith is found to stand not in the power of God, but in the wisdom of man, his hope to be a false one, his love only fleshly and excited feelings, his zeal a spark from the fire of his own kindling, his light darkness, and his wisdom folly; when he sees Tekel written upon his forehead, and he trembles lest he should be lost after all his profession; when he cannot find that God has begun a good work in him, and yet lifts up his voice and entreats the Lord to have mercy upon him, and to lead him in the way everlasting; when his spirit is broken with grief and sorrow, his strength has failed him and is gone, his beauty is turned into corruption, his sweet smell become a stink, and his girdle a rent; when, under these feelings, he is constrained to sit alone and to keep silence, to separate from those he once walked with, and to esteem those to be the excellent of the earth that he once despised; when he feels the vanity of all teaching but divine teaching, the folly of all wisdom which comes not from "the Spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Jesus," and the abomination of all religion that is not planted in the heart by God's own hand; when he besieges the throne of grace with fervent petitions that he may not go on deceiving and being deceived, but that he may know the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom he hath sent; that he may have godly sorrow bestowed upon him, to work in his soul repentance not to be repented of; and that he may have the fear of God, which is the beginning of wisdom, put into his heart, with faith, hope, and charity, a tender conscience, godly sincerity, truth, uprightness, meekness, and humility. Then he may be said to have heard the still small voice of Wisdom, to have heard her rod, and who hath appointed it. He has then the features of a "blessed" man. "Blessed is the man that heareth me."

But there are other ways in which the blessed man hears the voice of Wisdom. "My people, saith the Lord, are bent to backsliding." And there is no blessed man who is not sensible of the truth of this declaration. Wisdom speaks to her backsliding children, and makes them know that they have committed two evils, in forsaking her, the fountain of living waters, and hewing out to themselves cisterns, broken cisterns, that can hold no water. Thus, when he who has backslidden in heart from Wisdom's ways, who has got entangled in the snares of his sinful heart, the world that lieth in wickedness, and the father of lies; when he who has "mingled himself among the people," and has become as "a cake unturned," unsavoury to the world and burdensome to the church, lukewarm, carnal, and careless; when he to whom neither heavenly things nor earthly things afford satisfaction; when he who has no heart for the former, and is condemned and unhappy in the latter; when (I say) such a one begins to feel the error of his way; to bemoan himself, and to look upwards, and confess his sin to the Lord; to loathe himself, and to cry, "Turn thou me, and I shall be turned;" to long for the snare in which he is held to be broken; to be enabled once more to feel the Lord to be nigh; to be permitted to draw nigh to him without alarm, weariness, or aversion; to walk in his ways, to rejoice in his smiles, and to

tremble at his frowns; to delight himself in God, and to seek his glory; when he "accepts the punishment of his iniquity, "smarts under his wounds, groans under his hardness," roars like a bear, and mourns sore like a dove;" when he is brought to lie in the dust, covered with shame, and is sometimes a little cheered by a word of encouragement for a moment resting upon his drooping spirit, producing softness, contrition, self-abasement, and greater desire to be permitted to touch the hem of Wisdom's garment; when his conscience no longer lets him do violence to it without striking "a dart through his liver," and every backward step adds "grief to his sorrow;" when he is constrained to attend to and to obey the commands that are laid upon his heart, although it mortifies his pride and debases him in the sight of man so to do; when, though his prayer seems to be shut out from the Lord, and a cloud is upon the throne of grace, he yet calls, cries, and shouts, nor can give Wisdom any rest until she hears and answers; *then* he hears her voice, and Wisdom, sooner or later, makes him feel that "blessed is the man that heareth" her.

Thus, then, Wisdom's voice is heard in conviction of sin, in the breaking down and rooting up of false religion, and in the convincing of the backslider that his ways are crooked and bitter. But has she no voice to declare where are her footsteps in providence, and her ways in love, mercy, grace, and faithfulness? Has this gentle, affectionate, and wise mother no kind words for her children, no promises, no consolations for her burdened and mourning family? She has; she does not use the rod alone; she does not only wound, kill, and bring down; she has words of healing, words of restoring, words of deliverance, words of gracious instruction, and of tender faithfulness. In providential trials she often causes her blessed children to feel and to confess that there was a needs be for the affliction. She calls them to her feet, to make known their wants and requests, and puts words into their hearts that they may plead with her and prevail. The blessed Spirit enlightens their eyes to see her smiles in the parting of the clouds, and sometimes to discern her good will where, to reason, there is no trace of it. Many have found, and still find, that seasons of temporal calamity are made by Wisdom the way of entrance to her chambers, and the way of approach to her bosom. Greater nearness to her, more dependance upon her almighty arm, more confidence in her mercy and goodness, a deeper sense of her power to deliver, and of the fulness of her blessed words, are more frequently found in adversity than were felt in prosperity. Something secret, but strong, keeps the blessed man looking to his gentle mother for help and protection; something causes him to take shelter under her outspread wings; and although unbelief would sink him with despondency, something is communicated to him which holds him up, and constrains him to say, "I will trust thee, though thou slay me." He believes that he will be extricated from his difficulty, but how he cannot tell. He feels that he cannot fall, but he sees not how he can stand. He believes that assistance will be afforded, but he cannot guess from what quarter it will come. Here he often hangs, like a balance blown upon by the winds; sometimes the scale of faith and

hope is the more weighty, and sometimes that of fear and doubt. And thus he is kept, till Wisdom suddenly comes to her temple, and causes her voice to be heard in the deliverance which she brings. Wisdom can speak by an angel; by the ravens and brook; by a prophet; by fire from heaven; by preserving her children unhurt in the flames; by shutting the mouths of the lions; by slaying Goliath by the hand of a stripling, armed with a sling and a stone; by multiplying the loaves and fishes; by restoring the sick child to health and the dead to life; by healing the sick, opening the eyes of the blind, making the lame man to leap as a hart, and the tongue of the dumb to sing. Wisdom never wants for means, nor can any deafness prevent her voice from being heard when she designs to speak. Sweet is her voice to those who hear it; powerful is her arm unto those in whose behalf it is revealed; loving is her heart to those who lie near her bosom; and full of consolation are her breasts to those whom she causes to seek and be satisfied therewith. Wisdom's voice, then, drives fear away and brings comfort and thankfulness, in providential things; and does it not effect the same in spiritual concerns? Yes; here too she speaks; here is she heard. When bowed down under an accumulation of guilt, sin, and misery, and the soul is faint within, because Wisdom has so long kept silence, and has seemed inattentive to the groaning and sighing of the prisoner; when fears of destruction are many, and the cable is strained to the utmost, and seems just ready to snap and sever the vessel from the anchor by which it is held; then does Wisdom speak; then her "fear not" is heard; then does she sprinkle her peace-speaking blood upon the guilty conscience, or give power to the faint to lay hold upon some merciful declaration, gracious invitation, or cheering promise. She speaks away all the guilt, and fills the soul with joy and peace in believing, or helps it with a little help, and strengthens it with a little strength, as she sees good. To some she speaks with more, and to some with less power. Some hear her voice of love and mercy frequently and clearly, and some rarely and faintly. But *all* her children *do* hear her voice, and experience, in measure and degree, the blessedness of her words to the weary, heavy laden, destitute, guilty, and forlorn. Some hear it on their knees, and some when walking by the way and conversing or meditating on the things pertaining to salvation. Some hear it under the preached word, and some in reading the word. Some hear it in a text applied verbatim, and some in the substance of a text gradually distilling its dew upon the soul. But in whatever degree or in whatever way Wisdom's voice is heard, the like effects are produced, the like spices flow out; sensible relief, grace, mercy, and goodness are felt, which lead the soul to repentance; brokenness of heart, humility, and abasement of self are found; the sinner is brought low, and the Saviour is exalted; the creature lies in the dust, and the Creator fills the throne; unbelief is silenced, and faith is heard; pride is stained, and a meek and lowly spirit is put on; fear and torment are cast out, and love is shed abroad in the heart; Christ is All and in all, and the creature is nothing in nothing. O blessed is the man that hears this voice,

that is come to the blood of sprinkling, which speaketh better things than that of Abel; for, says Wisdom, "Blessed is the man that heareth me." None but the blessed long to hear this voice; they alone hear Wisdom speaking, in reproofs and pardon, in chastisement and mercy, in darkness and in light, in sorrow and in consolation, in warnings and in promises, in death and in life.

(To be continued in our next.)

BOUND UP IN THE BUNDLE OF LIFE.

My dear Brother in the Lord Jesus, who is our only hope, help, salvation, shield, hiding place, and strong tower, to whom be glory, dominion, wisdom, riches, power, thrones, crowns, and eternal hallelujahs from all the countless myriads of redeemed sinners. O the spotless purity, ravishing beauty, and transcendent excellency of his adorable person! Yes, my dear brother, he is altogether lovely, but it is no good to tell you anything about my wretched and execrated self, and I am truly sorry that I can say so very little to the honour of my great All in All. It is really a wonder to me that he puts up as he does with my crooked and perverse ways, and yet it is with difficulty that I am led to see and believe that he is so kind and constant a friend to me as he is in truth. Since I last saw you I have been greatly sunk with heavy loads of woes. I could tell some of them if required, but of others I could not for shame tell you or any other creature under heaven. But these heavy burdens are the means, through grace, of making prayer my daily work and my meat and drink. I talk more to my dear Lord than any other creature, and I make free to tell him my very worst. He condoles with me in the afflictions which I, in my own folly, procure to myself, and sometimes gives me such an unspeakable glance of his free mercy towards such a ten times worse than brute, that he ravishes and melts me to nothing; yet still does he often leave me like a silly dove without heart, for I have no heart for my Bible, nor for my family, nor for my friends, nor for my food, nor for my lying down or rising up, for going out or coming in, for talking, praying, or for singing. When my dear Jesus is thus gone away from me,

"I tire, and faint, and mope, and mourn,
And am but barren still."

But keen necessities, through grace, urge me to earnestness in seeking him again. I often think of you, and amidst my many cares I heave a sigh to our dear Friend for you. I had a sweet season at your house, and I felt that our redeeming God was there indeed. O, bless his name, my heart warms when I think of it! I was filled with fear before I went that all would turn out to no profit; but it was not so, for He melted my hard heart, and filled it with love to his dear children there assembled. I felt such things there as I can neither write nor forget, and my solemn conviction is that you are a highly favoured man indeed, and that the King of kings and Lord of lords is with you, resides in your heart, and is graciously present

at your meetings. Moreover, I am constrained to say that I feel such a knitting of soul to the little knot that were present that day, that I think I could live and die with them. God, my dear brother, has done great, yea, very great things for you. He tries you, but he loves you; he chastens you, but it is for your profit; he hides himself from you, but it is to exercise your faith, your hope, your love, your patience, and your prayers; he shuts you up, but not into the hand of the enemy, and does it that he may make his mercy shine the more in setting you free; he straitens you, that he may enlarge you; he sinks you, that he may lift you; he wounds you, that he may heal you; he gives you pain, that he may give you ease; he makes you poor, that he may make you rich; he makes you roar, that he may make you sing; he sends you all your crosses, that he may make you like himself; he kills you to this life, that you may live a life eternal; and he will take you out of this world, wherein you are a poor beggar, that you may reign with him eternally in the world above. The devil and cursed unbelief shall not in this make me a liar, although I can assure you that at the present I know not how to think for myself; but if they are believers to whom Christ is precious, as doubtless they are, then am I a believer, for at times he is indescribably precious to me, and the solemn verity of God's word is, "He that believeth in the Son of God hath eternal life, and they shall never perish."

My dear friend, I cannot but think it proper that I should write to you at this time, as I feel so very comfortable whilst doing so, yet I dare say I shall regret it ere long. Please to give my very kind love to all those who met me at your house, yea, and to all others who may, for the truth's sake, love such an unworthy worm. Remember me very kindly to your wife, and, if it be the Lord's blessed will, may he reveal himself unto her. Bigot as I am thought, I really love all whom God loves, known or unknown, and that is enough for me to love; so let worldlings love the rest.

May the God of all grace preserve you from falling, and fill you with joy and peace in believing. So prays your unworthy brother,
Stratton, near Swindon, Wilts, June 30, 1842. J. S.

CHRIST IS ALL AND IN ALL.

Dear Friend,—May the tender mercies of a covenant God be with you. Through mercy, I arrived safe at home, but very poorly, and I have since been quite laid up. My complaint, which I had when I was at your house, kept getting worse until I reached home, and last Sunday I was unable to preach; but I now trust that I am getting better. What poor worms we are! The blessings of health are sovereign favours from our covenant God; not one breath we draw, nor one pulse beats, but at his disposal; and truly he is too wise to err, and too good to be unkind, notwithstanding all the fretfulness and rebellion of corrupt nature. "Many are the devices of a man's heart, nevertheless, the counsel of the Lord, that shall stand." Bless his dear name, "he is of one mind, and none can

turn him." If he did not rest in his love, there would be no more hope for worthless me than there is for devils; for if I am left to myself, the scenes which pass through my heart are shocking; and this brings me to loathe myself in dust and ashes; and, as Hart says,

"Shock'd at the sight, I straight cry out,
'Can ever God dwell here?'"

But blessings and honours for ever be to his holy name, he gives me again to prove in my soul that "grace reigns through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord;" and then my soul can exclaim, "Rejoice not against me, O my enemy, for when I fall I shall arise, when I sit in darkness, the Lord will be a light unto me." How sweet it is to find and prove our dear Lord and Saviour to be our salvation to save, our strength to support, our wisdom to guide, our light to shine, our fulness to supply, our righteousness to cover, our fountain to wash and cleanse, our Husband to succour, protect, and defend, our Friend that sticketh closer than a brother; our King, who rules over us, in us, and for us; our Captain, who has fought all our battles, conquered all our enemies, external, internal, and internal; our glorious and great High Priest, who has offered up himself, obtained an eternal redemption for us, and entered into the holy of holies, by his own blood. Christ is our everlasting All in all, and it is of him, and to him, and through him are all things, to whom be glory for ever. Amen. When my soul is favoured with sweet moments of communion and fellowship with Him, I envy no man in the world, I fear no devil in hell, and the only thing that my soul trembles at is a fear of offending my Lord, and I beg from my very heart that I may be kept from sinning against him. O precious Jesus, lovely Jesus, adorable Jesus! well might the church of old cry out, "His mouth is most sweet, yea, he is altogether lovely. This is my Friend, and this is my Beloved, O ye daughters of Jerusalem!" There is nothing wrong, either within or without, when Jesus is there. What a glorious eternity it must be for all the household of faith, to dwell at the Fountain-head, to see him as he is, to be for ever with him, and to be like him! O wonderful home! never to sin against him. O happy mansions of eternal rest! no noise of archers there; no cloudy, stormy days there; no long nights of dismal fears and anxious cries, "Watchman, what of the night?" no sinking with tremendous fears from the fiery darts of the devil, crying out, "O Lord, I am oppressed, undertake for me;" no afflictions, griefs, nor pains of either body or soul there; for "the inhabitant shall not say, I am sick." Happy place of rest! where the wicked cease from troubling, and where the weary are for ever at rest. O that my soul may be kept looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of our God and Saviour Jesus Christ!

My dear friend, at times my soul can sing and triumph, exclaiming, "God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ." Indeed, there is no peace nor rest but in him. I don't wonder at David exclaiming, "Return unto thy rest, O my soul, for the Lord hath dealt bountifully with thee." Many will say, "Who will show us any good?" but, O Lord, lift thou up the light

of thy countenance upon us. This was the desire of Moses when he said, "If thy presence go not with us, carry us not up hence." I can assure you, my friend, that there is nothing so cutting to me as the hiding of the light of the loving countenance of him who is the chief among ten thousand, and the altogether lovely; for I am daily more and more convinced that without him I can do nothing. He is the strength of the needy in his distress, and when he is withdrawn, I feel myself a worm and no man; he is the light of Israel, and when he is withdrawn I am a poor blind bat, groping for the wall; he is the Resurrection and the Life, and when he is withdrawn I am in the midst of death; he is the consolation of Israel, and when he is withdrawn, sorrow fills my heart; he is the great Captain that gains all my victories, and when he is withdrawn, the enemy is roaring, "Pursue him and take him, for God has left him;" he is the only Husband that can succour, protect, and defend, and when he is withdrawn, I am a widow forsaken, and grieved in spirit; he is the only Shield that can with safety defend, and when he is withdrawn, the fiery darts of the devil split, cut, and chop my poor soul till I cry out, "My soul is scattered at the grave's mouth;" in a word, he is All in all, and if he is withdrawn, there is nothing left but an aching void, let my soul look where it may. If Jesus has hidden his face, all is gone that is worth having, for it is of him, and through him, and to him are all things, to whom be glory for ever. Amen. O how my soul dreads to be left alone, especially in the ministry of the word! O the importance of standing up in the name of the Lord, professing to be God's mouth to never-dying souls! How my poor soul has many times staggered into the pulpit like a drunken man, fearing that the Lord had entirely left me, and that my preaching was nothing but an empty noise, which went no farther than the ears of the people. My preaching sound doctrine does not satisfy my soul, except I can perceive some satisfactory testimony that God the Holy Ghost is bearing witness, by signs following, that it is of God; and I can assure you that when the Lord's presence is withdrawn from me, and I am obliged to go and speak in the dark, I experience terrible scenes of misery in my soul. O the many times I have been determined to give it up, and never to go into the pulpit again. I cannot take a text, and divide it, and subdivide it, and write it down, and commit it to memory, and then fill it up with a few other texts. My study is chiefly wrestling with God in prayer and tears, begging of him that he would provide me with a message, that he would bless me with light to see, with life to feel, with memory to contain, and with liberty to express, and, above all things, that he would with power carry it home to the hearts of his own people. If there is no power, all is valueless; for "the kingdom of God is not in word but in power." Paul says, "My preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power, that your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God." And O how I have been astonished to see the mighty power of God attending his word, when my soul has been full of confusion! and I have been so ashamed

when I have come down from the pulpit, that I have not known where to hide my face. Ah! my friend, God will stain the pride of all our glory, and he will keep teaching us, for we need lesson upon lesson, that we may know that "it is not by might nor by power, but by the Spirit of the Lord." He will not give his glory to another, nor suffer his praise to be given to graven images. Bless his holy name, who ought to have the glory but himself? No one, for he does all the work. All praise belongs unto him.

That the Lord Jesus Christ may bless you and all the dear friends at L— with much of his presence, is the prayer of your unworthy brother in Christ,

Trowbridge, Nov. 18, 1841.

J. W.

SOME UNPUBLISHED LETTERS OF THE LATE MR. BROOK, OF BRIGHTON.

Messrs. Editors,—Some unpublished letters of the late Mr. Brook of Brighton, having been sent to me by a friend, I purpose to forward one to you every month for insertion in your periodical. A few of them are without date, so that I cannot promise to let you have them in the exact order in which they were written.

There is, in my view, something so original, weighty, pointed, and sweet in Mr. Brook's letters, that I doubt not they will prove very acceptable to such of your readers as want something more than words and sound; and who cannot help feeling dissatisfied with the generality of writings that are in circulation among professing people, seeing that they lack an unction from the Holy One, and are made up of vain repetitions, hackneyed expressions, set phrases, and borrowed ideas, which cause even the writings of many gracious men to send forth a savour too closely resembling the "dead flies" in the apothecary's ointment.

Wishing you much of the Lord's presence, and all the strength and encouragement that you stand in need of, I remain, Messrs. Editors, yours in sincerity and affection,

Stoke, October, 1842.

G. I.

LETTER I.

My dear Friend,—I have considered your last letter somewhat particularly, and cannot still but think that the hand of God is upon you for good. Though you write all bitter things against yourself, it appears to me to be from a want of light upon your case. You speak of coldness, deadness, and indifference towards a heavenly Parent, which you can hardly be persuaded a real child of God, even in his infantine state, can feel; that you are an abortion, a poor deformed creature, &c. Now, if you were ever so long established as a favourite of God, you would have reason to make the same complaint. Paul had, I am persuaded, more or less to his dying day. But according to your account, it was not more than a twelvemonth ago that you awoke out of a long delusion. It appears to me that you

are quickened, but not delivered. You, therefore, begin to feel the miserable effects of the fall of man; his awful distance from God, enmity against him, ignorance of him; the corruptions of your heart, the weakness of your nature, the danger of your state, the power of your enemies, the evil of this world, the nothingness of human wisdom, &c. &c. The feeling sense of all these things more than accounts for your sad complaints. Besides, your situation in life is most perplexing. The school business to a galled conscience and hard yet struggling heart, the demands of a family, the occupation of a preacher, each of these singly is enough to make your burden lie heavy indeed. I have known it all; but, in the Almighty's hand, all these things shall be made profitable, though not without affliction.

You are further entangled by a preaching fraternity who hate you, but will not let you alone; with connections in the world, and an unhealthy tabernacle. I do not wonder, therefore, at what you feel; and you may rest assured that the work must go much deeper. I cannot hope for your deliverance, nor pray for it, till many a dark and cloudy day has passed over; for if so, an abortion you would prove. The Lord has but just taken you in hand; and no wonder that you kick at the rod. You just begin to taste of the bitter cup; no marvel if you loathe it, and would pass it by if possible. Knowest thou not that no affliction for the present moment seemeth joyous but grievous? and what son is there whom the father chasteneth not? You must first learn the character of God as a master, and render him the obedience of a servant, before ever you honour him as a father, and enjoy the privileges of a son.

You may ask, then, what is your state? According to my judgment, God is bringing you into bondage. This is the state of a servant. You feel no access to him, nor real love of him; and how can you, as a servant? You can only grow in Christ Jesus to any comfortable purpose. You are looking out for faith and love without having experienced half enough of the evil heart of unbelief, and the enmity of the carnal mind. This work is all going downwards, and terrible havoc it makes; but it is needful. If you were to tell me of your great light, joys, and peace, I should suspect them all, and be persuaded that, if God were your friend, you must go down into the pit where there is no light nor water, for in no other place can you learn your need of a Saviour. To tell you the truth, all my hopes of you are founded upon this, that you are going down into the land of darkness and the shadow of death; and I shall rejoice to hear from you accounts of anguish, terror, temptations, bondage and fears, barrenness, hunger, thirst, curse, wrath, enmity, unbelief, &c. &c. I know what will come after; and, moreover, this course will cast off many lovers and acquaintance that are a trouble to you, as well as acquaint you with yourself, humble you before God, and gather you out of this world. I cannot but think that God is fitting you for a yokefellow to me and others, in bearing testimony against human inventions in religion of all kinds. Another young man, W. B—, a clergyman in Kent, is upon the move to the same quar-

ter. May you both seek His face who maketh Orion and the seven stars, and turneth the shadow of death into the morning! We want more *labourers*.

Poor Mr. J— is very unwell, and will not be able to come to — this winter. I purpose to do so in the course of two or three weeks, but will let you know in due time.—Ever yours affectionately,

W. J. BROOK.

**“BLESS THE LORD, O MY SOUL, AND ALL THAT
IS WITHIN ME BLESS HIS HOLY NAME.”**

Dear Friend and Brother,—I take my pen to inform you that the good Lord has been very gracious to my poor soul last night and to-day. For weeks it has been my unhappy lot to be much exercised with the things of time, trade being very bad with me, and bills falling due when I was not able to meet them. Night after night, for hours together, I could not close my eyes to sleep, and could see no possibility of carrying on my business. Being left to my own feeling, I often concluded that I must become bankrupt, and be reduced to abject poverty. These things took such hold upon me that I was completely buried in them; and instead of casting my burden upon the Lord, he was seldom in my thoughts. Prayer was neglected; there was no praise, no felt gratitude to God, no looking again towards his holy temple; but I was like one who neither regarded God nor the operations of his hands. O how awful to be left in such a state! If it be the will of God, I do desire I may ever in future be kept from sinking into so wretched a place.

Last night, while perusing the Book of Chronicles, and reading about good Hezekiah and Josiah, my soul went out in secret desires to God that he would enable me to honour him in a similar manner. Before I retired to bed, I went down upon my knees with my family, which I had not done, with a few exceptions, for some weeks past, in consequence of the above-mentioned state of mind. I was endeavouring to ask the Lord to bless me, and to give me a thankful heart for his mercies bestowed upon me, when I had such a feeling sense of my past conduct, and of the Lord's long-suffering and compassion, in bearing and putting up with me, in supplying my daily wants and continuing my existence, that I was laid low at his feet in contrition of soul. My hard, stubborn heart was melted and softened, and I wept before the Lord on account of my baseness and ingratitude to so kind and precious a God. When I retired to bed I could not sleep; God had made my heart soft, and I enjoyed such a solemn frame of mind, that I could not refrain from weeping, praising, and blessing the Lord for condescending to give me such tender feelings. And while confessing my sinfulness, and wondering how the dear Lord could be so gracious and merciful to me, seeing I had forgotten him and gone on in the way I had done, my heart was again overpowered with sweet tenderness, because the Lord assured me that he had not only given me a thankful heart, and that he had borne with my ungodly ways, but that he had forgiven the very sins I was then

confessing before him, by sweetly and powerfully speaking to my soul these blessed words: "There is forgiveness with thee, that thou mayest be feared; (Ps. cxxx. 4;) and also, "For with the Lord there is mercy, and with him is plenteous redemption." (Ps. cxxx. 7.) I have it, I feel it! I have proved it; and could bear witness for God that it is true. Wonder, O heavens, and be astonished, O earth, at the mercy, goodness, and condescension of God to such a hell-deserving sinner! O what mercy, what love! I was for some time lost in surprise; and all I could say was, "O thank the Lord, bless the Lord; yea, bless his holy name! O what a blessed thing to be enabled to rejoice, really and spiritually, in the atoning blood, precious love, and forgiving mercy of a Three-One God! O continue this frame of mind to me, dear Lord! O Lord, thou art good; ever give me a soft heart! O what mercy! O Lord, thou art good to me! O bless thy dear name, I will praise thee, for thou art worthy!" I could feelingly sing, "Happy are the people that are in such a case; yea, happy are the people whose God is the Lord!" Such was the language of my soul.

This day I have experienced much communion with and nearness of access to God. Neither expected disturbances nor distressing rumours, which sounded in my ears at every house I entered, disturbed my peace. I was enabled to soar above these earthly things; and, in deep humility of soul, to go on like one of old, rejoicing, and placing no confidence in the flesh. Every thing around me appeared beautiful. I seemed to be surrounded with the mercy and love of God in Christ Jesus; yea, the love of God was shed abroad in my heart. I asked the Lord again and again to continue this feeling; and that, if he should ever again permit me to walk in darkness, I might not sin against him as I had done, and that I might not be left without feeling, but have a deep sense of the same, and mourn on account of it.

To-day I have again been blessed in reading the ninth chapter of Ezra. Read the chapter; it is a blessed one. The effects of the fear of God on the quickened soul appear to me as plain, in that chapter, as the pen I now hold in my hand. While crossing the fields, I could not but sing to the praise of that mercy I had found. The mercy of God was the theme of my song, and the boast of my tongue. As I passed on, contemplating the wonders and goodness of God, these words came with sweetness and power to my mind: "Thou hast put gladness in their heart, more than in the time that their corn and their wine increased." (Ps. iv. 7.) "Yes, Lord!" I replied; "the worldling may prize his possessions, and pride himself in calling them his own. But thou, O Lord! art mine; and having thee by precious faith, I possess all things." I entered a bye lane, and my soul was singing aloud in the confidence that God was my God. So awful and sweet was the lane that I was unwilling to proceed further, when these words of the poet Watts came into my mind. I felt their import, and I sang them before God:

"My willing soul would stay,
In such a frame as this;

And sit, and sing herself away
To everlasting bliss."

Onward I went, admiring the beautiful fields of corn, and blessing and praising the Lord. My soul, ascending to God, besought him that he would enable me to bring forth fruit to his honour, in as visible a manner as the corn before me; and then, all of a sudden, (how it was I know not,) I was obliged to stand still, gazing upon the corn, when these words burst forth from my heart and mouth: "O Lord, bless me, and raise me up in thy church like the corn before my eyes! Clothe me in such a manner with spiritual grace, that I may in very deed 'feed the church of God, which thou hast purchased with thy blood!'" Such were my feelings at this time, that I wept like a child before the Lord; and, being near a house at which I had to call, I had to sit down till I became more composed.

O my dear John, praise God with me! for it is good, and praise is comely. Well might David call out as he did, "Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me bless his holy name! Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits, who forgiveth all thy iniquities, who healeth all thy diseases." (Ps. ciii. 1—3.) In the place of a hard and stubborn heart he has given me a broken and a contrite heart; and, what is more, he saith he will not despise it. In place of a prayerless feeling, I have a heart overflowing with praise and thankfulness. In place of a sealed book, which the Bible had been for a long time, every page I now read in the volume of truth fits my soul, and fills it again and again with thankfulness. O what love! "God is love;" "God is good;" "God is merciful;" yea, and my soul shall bless his name for ever and ever. I cannot write as I feel. "O bless the Lord with me, and let us magnify his name together!" "O let us give thanks unto the Lord, for he is good; for his mercy endureth for ever." (Ps. cvi. 1.) I am lost in wonder! Mercy, mercy, mercy is all I can sing about. God is merciful; and it is said, "Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy." I can do nothing but crown Him with songs of mercy, for what he has done for my poor soul.

May the Lord give you the same blessed feelings. May he open up the riches of his grace, and enable you, with me, to sing of his free and sovereign mercy. The Lord bless you! Amen.

Chorley, August 15, 1842.

J. G.

THE WATER OF LIFE.

* * * But after all, the Spirit blessing it, the water of life and the unspeakable blessings connected with and contained in it, cures the most inveterate diseases that sin and Satan can inflict upon the sons of men. It has been known to cure internal plagues of all descriptions. In fact, it heals the blind, the dumb, the lame, the burdened, the leper, and all manner of uncleanness and filth, and has made tens of thousands of the most detestable, filthy creatures that ever lived more glorious than an angel of light; and, what adds to its blessedness is, that it is all free, "without money and without price."

"The poorer the wretch, the welcomer here."

I have, as a wonder to myself, known a single sip of it to raise my poor soul above the world, the devil, and sin, to the sweet enjoyment of the glorious Three-One God, and set it a dancing to the solemn and glorious tune and song of "Glory to God in the highest!" Yet, my brother, a few more pull backs, and I shall, through the matchless riches of God's discriminating grace, be out of the reach of all my enemies, and for ever bathe and drink at the spring head, and eternally sing the wonders of electing, redeeming love. Sinners, vile, ungodly sinners, are at their wits' end, overwhelmed with filth and guilt, distracted under a feeling of their horrible condition. Such vile wretches (and such a one am I) are saved by the unparalleled, matchless grace of God, and saved from every foe, and saved in the Lord to every good, and to and with the Lord for ever! This, this is grace indeed! Well may it be said, that they are "men wondered at." When a sweet enjoyment of this grace acts upon the conscience, under the bedewing, sealing power of God the Holy Ghost, the poor sinner himself exclaims, "Wonder, O heavens, and be astonished, O earth, for the Lord hath done it!" What a wonderful shout to the heavens of God's free grace will my poor soul give when it leaves this body, and enters into the glorious presence of the Lord, where all will be God and glory!

Well, my dear friend, may it be your happiness and mine, under the glorious teachings of God the Spirit, to drink more deeply into the deep things of God while in this vale of tears. May we never be suffered to rest satisfied with a mere brain religion, but, by the unctuous teachings of the Spirit, daily prove and enter into the glory and power of God's discriminating grace, and then both you and I know that we shall feelingly say, "By the grace of God, I am what I am," and in some blessed measure we shall be enabled to live in the Lord, to the Lord, and for the Lord.

That the best of blessings may rest upon and dwell in you, and the peace of God be in your heart, and that your heart and tongue may be under the sweet teachings and blessed unction of God the Spirit, is the prayer of yours in the Lord,

Manchester.

W. G.

TAKING THE LORD AT HIS WORD.

Messrs. Editors,—There are several high-sounding professors of the doctrines of grace, very much given to charge the tried and tempted mourner in Zion with "not taking the Lord at his word," when nothing is more false. But they mean that he ought to rest upon a well-ordained covenant, as *they* say they do. But the Lord does not intend that he should, and therefore he applies certain portions of his word to the soul that are of a condemning nature, and makes him tremble at his word. But the bastards in Zion are not rebuked and chastened by the Lord; therefore they are not in trouble as good men are, but their strength is firm. I can speak for myself, and say, that I have often found the word of the Lord very piercing indeed. And the

words that the blessed Jesus uttered to the man that was born blind have thrown me down several times; they are, "Dost thou believe on the Son of God?" I have been all in an agitation when I have applied them to myself, for I have not been able to answer in the affirmative, and could not if all the world were given to me; and instead of having joy and peace in believing, I have been filled with unbelief, sin, and guilt. Yet I have known, and felt firmly persuaded too, if I have not divine faith I must perish. I have taken the Lord at his word and believed it firmly, that "he that believeth not shall be damned." And O! how I have begged, and poured out my soul before the Lord, that he would cause me to believe to the saving of my soul. I have had knowledge enough of the doctrines of the gospel; I have wanted no one to tell me salvation is all of grace; but I have thirsted for a feeling sense of pardon, and have wanted to feel the good effects of the grace of God within. I have longed to feel my soul melted by divine love, and my heart enlarged to praise the dear Redeemer of lost sinners. And I have longed again and again to hear the Lord speak with power, "I am thy salvation;" and then I must take the Lord at his word, yes, and be glad enough to do so, for the chief cause of one's distress is to find prayer unanswered. But many say they are strong in faith, who I believe are strong in presumption; for, if you watch them, they are very carnal, very worldly, very covetous, very vain in their conversation, yes, and living in such things as a man with a tender conscience could not allow. A man who is really strong in faith gives glory to God; he shines as a light in the world, and his affections are set upon things above, and not upon things below. The chief reason of my doubting my interest in eternal love, is because I find myself so contrary to many parts of scripture. It is said, "a good tree bringeth forth good fruit," and "the tree is to be known by its fruit." Ah! (say some) faith is the fruit. "But knowest thou not, O vain man, that faith without works is dead?" And if thou dost not take the Lord at his word now, thou wilt have to do. I, for one, believe what the apostle saith, and very often beg for that faith which works by love; which causeth the soul to deny self, and to give up all for the Lord. And I do not consider it Arminianism to doubt one's state, if the fruits of the Spirit are felt to be lacking. It is an unspeakable mercy to be made really acquainted with what vital godliness is. A man that is ignorant of this may go dreaming on all his days with an empty notion, and yet think very highly of his religion. He may say, "the kingdom of God is not in word, but in power," and contend for it too, and yet never be able to give any account of the power of the Holy Ghost in his own soul. "Come to particulars," says Bunyan; "we are lost in generals." At any rate, the salvation of the soul is a very great and a very weighty matter; and a man must have something more than a sound creed to assure him he is chosen to eternal life. O the horror of mind I have felt at times, fearing I was only an enlightened man, a letter Christian at most! and I do believe that a man that gets into this state will want something more than notion, and will think more of life than knowledge. And however much he may

understand of the Scriptures, he will be little in his own eyes, a poor debtor to sovereign mercy; and a token of good from the Lord will be better than the opinion of all the men in the world. But the way in which most of our high-boasting professors take the Lord at his word is dreadfully dangerous; they merely take the letter of the word, and therefore are never affected by any part in a good way. They never find the word as a hammer to break down, nor as a word in season to build up; yet they are very pleased with themselves and their creed, and seem to glory in bantering the Arminians, as this is counted zeal in a good cause. They despise the poor and the needy, and hate that ministry that demands vital godliness. They are "heady, highminded, and haters of them that are good;" but the discerning, experimental, and broken-hearted children of God have to take the Almighty at his word, and come out from among them and be separate.

Rochford, Essex.

J. H.

"WHO HEALETH ALL THY DISEASES."

My dear Friend,—This sheet is enriched with an account of the goodness of the Lord God of spiritual Israel, manifested to my soul on last Lord's day. In the morning I was attacked with inflammation in the bowels, and sent for Mr. —, who rendered that assistance that the dear Lord was pleased to enable him for the benefit of the bodies of sinful men. The pain of body was great, but the pain of soul was much greater. I felt at that time what I had not felt to the same degree before, namely, the exceeding sinfulness of sin. I never in my life felt such thick darkness of soul, nor such a heavy burden of sin. I thought every moment my soul would be separated from my body, and be sent to that place where hope of deliverance cannot enter. This I truly felt to be the just desert of my immortal soul; my dreadful sins had done this. Hope completely failed. Death stared me in the face. But O! the dear, the precious Lamb of God, that took away the sins of the elect world, was most graciously pleased to manifest himself to my parched, yes, my sin-parched soul, as the God that "pardoneth iniquity, transgression, and sin." O my dear friend, could I but tell you one thousandth part of the joy, the love, the glory the dear Lord the Spirit brought into my soul! But no, it cannot be told; it passeth knowledge. You know and have felt the love of a triune God, and are a witness of his faithfulness and truth. I felt these words pass through my mind a great number of times, but had no power put forth in them: "In all their afflictions he was afflicted, and the angel of his presence saved him." "He made his soul a sacrifice for sin." "He put away sin by the sacrifice of himself." All this I well knew; but the matter was close at home. Was it for *my* sins? O how my soul wrestled with the Lord, that he would be pleased to come and bless me with one more token of his precious love! And, blessed be his almighty name! he was better than all my fears; his love, his precious, his dying, his everlasting, rich, free, unmerited love filled my

soul. My language was, "Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me praise his holy name!" Bless his precious love! Glory, glory is in my soul! Bless his name, bless his love! I feel his free salvation, his sweet mercy, his full, free, and finished salvation is mine! O sweet Jesus, blessed Jesus, I am thine! Whether I live or die I am the Lord's! If he should be pleased to take me out of time into eternity in the dark, I am sure I shall go to be with him for ever and ever! Bless, O bless his sweet, his dear name! I am his; he redeemed me with his most precious blood! He gave himself a sacrifice for *me*, the most vile, most sinful being that ever lived on this earth! O bless his precious name!"

You know, my dear friend, what David said when the dear Lord shed abroad his love in his soul. It was this: "The humble shall hear thereof and be glad."

Wallingford, March 4, 1842.

A. J.

"WHO ART THOU THAT THOU SHOULDEST BE AFRAID OF A MAN THAT SHALL DIE?"

My dear Friend and Brother,—I feel, at times, that I love you in the Lord, and that I love the Lord in you. I esteem it as a favour that you should have any thought or care for one who can hardly bear with himself; and I assure you that the trouble you take in sending to me and thinking upon me reminds me of the manifestation of God's mercy to my soul, and makes me exclaim, "Who am I, or what am I, that I should be thought upon by you? Can it be right? Can it be from feelings produced in your heart by the Holy Ghost?" If it be from him, then God does love me, notwithstanding all, and I feel humbled within me that poor unworthy I should have a place in your thoughts, or in the Lord's.

I am still walking in the midst of snares, temptations, enmity, and trials. I assure you this place is like a little hell to me; and I feel such a sinking of heart at the thoughts of entering into it, after I have been out on a Lord's day, that my knees have almost let me down; I feel it so hard to stand single-handed, with no one to take my part. I had a sharp trial on my mind about a fortnight ago, which made me roar, and cry, and quarrel with the devil and almost with God. I had made some shoes for a great farmer, and carried them home. He kept them in his house till Lord's day, and then put them on, and sent for me to come and see them on. I did not go, but stood trembling for the consequences, whether I went or stopped away; for I had refused many people before on a Lord's day, and now that the farmer had sent for me it appeared to me that I should be completely ruined if I refused to go. He then sent for me a second time; and I sent him word back that I should be happy to wait upon him on any ~~day~~ except Sunday, as that was a day on which I never did any business. And now the old serpent set on me unmercifully, and showed me what influence the farmer had in the place, reminding me of my debts, and hinting that I should be starved out, and that the whole parish would rejoice at my departure. O how

I groaned and roared on my road to C—, telling God I ~~never~~ could stand it, and blaming him for suffering me to get into such trouble! Yea, I felt that had the devil been a human being I should have fallen upon him with my stick, for setting the farmer at me on a Sunday morning; and as I went on, sobbing aloud, and telling the Lord I never could stand it, these words entered into my mind and heart with light and power: "God is able to make thee stand." O how the power of God did open to my view, while the words were repeated many times over in my heart! I felt willing, in a moment, to stand in the front, and bear all they could heap upon me; yea, cheerfully to bear up the cross. O how I entreated his blessed Majesty to be with me, and stand by me, and help me! I cast myself upon him; and now the words are a strength to my loins. The enemy would wrest them from me if he could, by making me question their coming from God; for I can't quite believe it now. Yet it leads me to lean upon God, and look to him for all; and I shall not give up to the devil yet. Adieu!

F—, Oct. 10.

H. M.

TO MR. HARRIS, MINISTER TO THE PLYMOUTH BRETHREN.*

Revered and truly Respected Sir,—Allow me to state my sorrow and grief at the doctrine that was delivered at the Upper room last Sabbath evening, June 26th, from the 5th chapter of Revelation, and 9th verse, viz.:—"And they sung a new song," &c. The minister told us that no song was now sung in heaven, neither had been since the creation, or would be until redeemed bodies and souls were united in glory; for although the souls of believers who are departed are with the Lord, they cannot and do not sing, from the absence of the body, but are waiting for the final consummation of all things, and then will be sung the new song of "Worthy the Lamb." However, on this part I have nothing to say, only I think Paul has a remark somewhere, and puts a question, "Are ye not carnal?" I only say in passing, I thought much valuable time was wasted ere redemption's work was spoken of.

But, alas! what a weak and distorted redemption did he endeavour to unfold! He spoke of redemption in allusion to the children of Israel being in Egyptian bondage, and "their redemption was by sprinkling the blood of the lamb on the door-posts, that when the destroying Angel passed over, wherever he saw the blood, he never stopped to ask whodwelt there,—if Jew or Egyptian, a good man or a bad man, whether they had led good lives or bad lives, either having good resolutions or bad, or how they intended to live,—for they believed in the blood of Jesus Christ and that redeemed them from

* The title to the Tract is, "To the Rev. Mr. Harris, faithful minister to the Plymouth Brethren." It will be seen that we have suppressed two words in this title by objecting, 1st, to the Popish title, "Reverend," and, 2nd, by doubting whether he deserves the appellation of "faithful" by allowing such miserable trash to be preached in "the upper room."

sins past, present, and to come." And more particularly addressing his hearers, he warned them from looking any where than to the blood of Jesus, and if they looked to and believed in that blood, their redemption was secure. He derided the doubts and hopes of any who thought themselves unredeemed, for they had only to believe: it matters nothing of their past, present, or future life, "they had but to believe they were redeemed, and they were safe, for God did not *want holy people in heaven, he had his holy angels, it was sinners he wanted there.*" He earnestly warned the congregation from deluding themselves with *hopes and hoping*, as it was one of the great delusions of the devil; for, said he, "what can be more dangerous to the soul than to say they hope they shall be saved, for they were to take redemption now;" and furthermore, "*it was wrong to pray for our redemption, as it was finished. We might so have prayed when Jesus was on earth, and it doubtless would have been right, but as now redemption was done, we had but to take it and be saved from all our sins, past, present, and to come.*" This is, Sir, the principal and leading part of the discourse, and a true detail of what was said. When I looked round on the various persons, and thought of the various characters which formed the congregation, my heart was pained within me, for surely, I thought, this is not preaching to the people the "words of this life."

The soul-satisfying, God-glorifying truth of having a full redemption in the sight of God, from sins past, present, and to come, is not conveyed to the soul by a mere belief in the redemption that is in Christ Jesus; for, if I may speak herein, while I now can sing

"Sins present, past, or sins to be,
Can never rend his love from me,"

it was not learnt in a day or two, or in fair weather, or walking in the light of his countenance. It was by terrible things in righteousness, and after the fountains of the great deep had been broken up, and from many and many renewed manifestations of his pardoning love; and this I say, that though I feel

"Now free from sin, I walk at large;
This Breaker's blood 's my soul's discharge;
Low at his feet content I stay,
A sinner saved, and homage pay."

Yet I cannot help praying to know more of Christ as my redemption, and am so taught that I feel the need of a daily redemption: and as for not *hoping to be saved*, I often find my desires going out in the words of an old-fashioned hymn:

"My soul into thy arms I cast;
I hope I shall be saved at last."

And there was one deeper taught than Mr. S— or I, has left it on record, "We are saved by hope." Now, Sir, in writing this, I wish not to indulge in a censorious spirit, I wish to make every allowance that a public speaker can wish, or the hearers freely allow; but when he repeats over and over again the same remarks, we cannot but conclude that they are in reality his mind on the subject matter of the discourse; and now I am obliged with

much sorrow to say, that, from first to last, the sermon was awfully defective. The person, work, and ministry of the Holy Ghost was not once mentioned; the internal supernatural work of believing by the demonstration of the Spirit with power, was never alluded to. Oh, no, it was only to consent—only to believe in the redemption through the blood of Jesus, and it mattered not what state you were in—how you lived; you have only to take the redemption and you are secure; surely on cool reflection, the speaker would start back from his own statements, and the fair inferences to be drawn. What! have I only to believe—does it not matter how I am, or how I shall live? Why the vilest wretch, wallowing in all manner of sin, can believe with an historical faith, yea, it is even less than the faith of devils.

But will it suit the soul, who, feeling the working of a guilty conscience, is striving to escape from the avenger of blood, and who, in an agony, is inquiring if there be any hope? Will it suit the soul, who, having tasted and felt the word of life, and known the peace that is sealed with blood, yet has since fallen by his iniquity, and who, feeling himself such an ungrateful, disobedient wretch, and fearing that all he has known and enjoyed of divine things was only a fair show in the flesh, and, instead of being able to take redemption or any blessing, is afraid to take any comfort. He trembles to think that his wound may be healed slightly; he puts his hand upon his mouth, and his mouth in the dust, and pours forth his burdened mind with, “God be merciful to me a sinner.” No, it will not, for

“True belief is more than notion,
Something must be known and felt.”

And rather would the sincere believer, one taught of God the Holy Spirit, be emptied from vessel to vessel, than be allowed to settle on his lees, or rest in a false peace; for nothing but a feeling sense of the godly motions of the Spirit, taking of the things of Jesus, and revealing them to the soul, will give or cause peace in the mind; and I am bold to say, that those who rest in anything short of it, know not the secrets of pardoning love; and this I know in contradistinction to the preacher's views, and by Christian experience in the light of God's most holy word, that the soul who has found redemption through his blood and the forgiveness of sins, has a divine nature within that pants after holiness, longs to be holy, prays to be kept from sin that it may not grieve him, trembles at his own depravity, delights in the will of God, and whilst he groans, and from the heart too, that the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, yet he sometimes rejoiceth that the Spirit lusteth against the flesh; and whilst he knows in part the mystery of iniquity, he earnestly prays to know more of the great mystery of godliness; and whilst he glories in the Lord that nothing can separate him from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus, he has learned by many a painful lesson, that it is an evil and a bitter thing to sin against God; and experimentally feeling that without Christ he can do nothing, he knows the value of the prayer of the royal

Psalmist: "Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation, and uphold me by thy free Spirit;" and again—"Teach me to do thy will, for thou art my God;" "Thy Spirit is good, lead me into the land of uprightness." We know what Paul said: "I will therefore most gladly glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me;" and I could multiply proof to show that

"Tis a sign of life within,
To groan beneath the plague of sin."

I have not penned or written what I have, with unkind feelings. I know that amongst you there are many who are indeed lovely and of good report, and those too who know how to sound the alarm over the Bleeding Sacrifice. But it is to discharge my conscience, and to bring again to the preacher's mind what he himself will be sorry should so unguardedly be stated. I earnestly hope he will be led by the Holy and Eternal Spirit into the mind of Christ; and I venture to express a hope that he would copy the noble Bereans, as I thought that there was a great falling-off in that respect.

To conclude, I would not for a moment have it thought that I would limit the preaching of the gospel of the grace of God.

Blessed be God, I feel my own need of a full and free salvation. I like that gospel which scorns condition, breathes salvation free as air. But I cannot be content without an unction from the Holy One, and must have the work and ministry of the Holy Ghost prominently maintained, and a *feeling sense of having "received the atonement."*—Commending you, dear sir, to the word of His grace, which is able to build you up, I am, in the bonds of the gospel, yours affectionately, &c.,

THEOPHILUS.

[The above Tract to which we have given insertion, speaks, we think, sufficiently for itself. It is certainly a striking confirmation of the remarks that we made some time since upon the views and sentiments of the Plymouth Brethren; with this difference, however, that it gives us even a worse idea of them than we had before, and unmasks their deceptive doctrines more completely. We will just run over a few of the leading points, assuming, which we may safely do, that it is a faithful representation of what was really delivered.

1. We were struck with the thought, how delusive are a few crude notions about unfulfilled prophecy, and how they mislead the mind where there is no experience! Had the preacher known any thing of felt mercy and tasted deliverance, he would not have represented the blessed saints as *waiting for a time future* to begin their song of praise to the Lamb. What! are "the spirits of just men made perfect" dumb, and does a sight of the King in his beauty kindle no song of rapture? He was better taught who said,

"But when this lisping, stammering tongue
Lies silent in the grave,
Then, in a nobler, sweeter song,
I'll sing Thy power to save."

If upon earth, when the Lord brings the soul up out of the horrible pit and the miry clay, he puts a new song into the mouth, (Ps. xl. 2, 3,) that tongue will not be dumb in glory.

2. The crude and unscriptural notions of the Plymouth Brethren concerning redemption, are in this little tract clearly shown. The killing of the Paschal Lamb in Egypt, and the sprinkling of its blood on the lintel and doorposts, clearly showed the *specialty and personality of redemption*. Was it not confined to the

children of Israel? But this ignorant man talks of the angel not stopping to "ask if an Egyptian dwelt there." There was an express command given that "they were to take to them every man a lamb according to the house of their fathers, a lamb for a house; every man according to his eating shall make your account for the lamb." (Exod. xii. 3, 4.) This effectually confined the Paschal Lamb to the children of Israel. Again, the sprinkling of the blood upon the lintel and doorposts was typical of the sprinkling of the blood of Christ upon the conscience.

But there is no evidence that the children of Israel in Egypt "believed in the blood of Jesus, and that redeemed them from sins past, present, and to come." They were not believers in the spiritual sense of the word, neither were they redeemed from their sins, for "their carcasses fell in the wilderness," and "they could not enter in because of unbelief;" and "God swore unto them in his wrath that they should not enter into his rest." (Heb. iii. 17—19.) They had indeed a Sandemanian faith—just such a one as the Plymouth Brethren preach and teach—for we read that "the people believed;" (Exod. iv. 31;) but it was not "with their heart unto righteousness," for they soon forgot his works, and they waited not for his counsel." (Ps. cvi. 13.) Nor did this Sandemanian faith keep them from rebellion, fornication, and idolatry, for "they joined themselves to Baalpeor, and ate the sacrifices of the dead."

3. "He derided the doubts and hopes of any who thought themselves unredeemed, for they had only to believe."

Well might David say, "Our soul is exceedingly filled with the scorning of those that are at ease, and with the contempt of the proud." But to deride the doubts and fears of the tempted and tried is no mark of grace. To sit in the seat of the scorner is a fearful spot. But these doubters "have only to believe." And so a man with a mortal disease in his vitals has only to get himself cured; and one who cannot swim, when he comes to a broad and rapid river, and is pursued by an enemy, has only to get across. But what ignorance it betrays in the poor deluded creature who could so prate about "only believing!" and how clearly it shows that he knows nothing experimentally of what the faith of God's elect is.

We need not pursue this subject any further; nor should we have introduced it had it not struck us that thus to expose error is sometimes profitable. Among our numerous readers we may have some quickened souls who are weak and wavering, and perhaps feel a secret leaning to the doctrines and ways of the Plymouth Brethren. For their sake chiefly have we re-opened this subject, and we hope it may convince them that such preaching and teaching is contrary to the word of God, and the teaching of the blessed Spirit in the soul.—Eds.]

OBITUARY.

Dear Brother in Christ,—You wished to hear of Thomas C. and I have been requested by the friends of F. to write to you. He fell asleep in Jesus at twelve o'clock on Tuesday night. I was there by three o'clock in the afternoon, and was with him most of the time, till within half an hour of his departure; and such a blessed sight I never before witnessed. When you were there, it seems that he was labouring hard for breath, and there was nothing more to be observed in him than what are the fruits of the first man's transgression. Mrs. C. told me that in the course of the morning he said to her, "I shall soon talk to you all." It seems by this that he had some forebodings on his mind of what he was about to be favoured with. After this, he cast his eyes upon his daughter Elizabeth, and said,

"True religion's more than notion."

And not long after, he spoke of the love of God as an everlasting love. When I went in he was as you saw him, but awake. Perceiving how hard he laboured for breath, I said to him, "The battle will soon be over." He looked hard at me, and, speaking very strong, said, "The devil, the devil is gone, and this is the victory, even our faith! It is all of grace, free grace; love, everlasting love!" He was then enabled to speak so that he might be heard at the bottom of the stairs or farther, and went on after this manner: "Thou dear Redeemer, dying Lamb! O praise him; you can't triumph enough. He shed his blood to redeem my soul from death; he redeemed my life from destruction; he died to redeem my soul from hell. I am redeemed not with corruptible things, no, not with corruptible things, but with the precious blood of Christ." He repeated these words several times, until his strength failed him. At times he was waked up either by his throat being stopped by phlegm, or by being a little convulsed, and as soon as he had strength to speak he went on in the same strain. There were six or eight of his religious friends present most of the time, besides his wife and several of his children. While I was standing by the side of his bed, he looked at me with great earnestness, and taking hold of my hand, said, "The Lord bless you with faith, bless you with hope." Then, speaking louder, he said, "Bless you with love for the good of his people." At another time, looking round upon us with a wonderful and pleasant countenance, he said, with strong emphasis, "I wish all your souls were as happy as mine." A short time after this he turned his eyes towards his children, and addressing them and his wife, said, "I can now resign you all into the hands of my dear Redeemer." This was followed with a most fervent and earnest prayer for them. I was very glad to hear this, for it was only last Monday week that I spoke to him on the subject of resignation, and he lamented the want of it, though when first he was taken ill he had a measure of it. He said very little for the last hour or two before he died. Most of what he said was in the course of the afternoon, and did greatly melt our hearts. We much admired the grace and goodness of God to his poor dear servant. We may well say with the hymn,

"'Twas thine own work, almighty God,
And wondrous in our eyes."

I remain, yours affectionately in the Lord,
Mayfield, August, 1839.

W. A.

POETRY.

Dear Editors,—The two following poems I have sent for insertion in your *Standard*. Their author was, when alive, a minister in Mr. Huntington's connection, and preached at Hitchin for forty years.

A LOVER OF GOOD MEN.

EXTRACT FROM A POETICAL LETTER TO A FRIEND.

Your dainty dish came safe to hand
Which rather put me to a stand,
To think a wretch so vile to see
A messenger of God should be.

I often think it can't be true,
Because my path has so much rue;
A dismal road, a thorny path,
Resembling much the way of death.

The burdens, too, I have to bear
 Alarm me with distressing fear,
 And likewise foes that lie in wait,
 But more especially of late.
 That inward nest, an awful den!
 Rising at once like armed men,
 And join'd by Satan's cruel rage,
 Against my helpless soul engage.
 And O, what yet is worse to tell,
 A victim to their rage I fell!
 Ah! now I thought my day was past,
 And I must sink to hell at last.
 Hitchin.

But yet, like Jonah, help'd to sigh,
 And loudly to the Saviour cry
 I did, and O! 'twas not in vain;
 He gave me Peter's look again.
 And through his mercy now I sing,
 Jesus my Saviour and my King, [wound,
 Whose blood 's a balm that heals my
 Whose truth 's a bandage girds me round,
 Whose name 's an ointment to my head,
 Whose goodness shall my table spread,
 Whose hand supplies in time of need,
 Yes, Jesus is the friend indeed
 of B. GATWARD.

REMEMBERING THE WAY.

O the trouble once I found!
 Jehovah's arrow made the wound
 Deep in my inmost soul;
 But in this dreadful deep distress
 I found no peace, no hope, no rest,
 Till Jesus made me whole.
 This good Physician did impart
 A cordial to my wounded heart,
 Composed of oil and wine.
 I can't forget that happy day
 When first I heard my Saviour say,
 "Cheer up, for I am thine!"
 Hitchin.

"Cheer up, poor soul," again he cries,
 While floods of tears poured from my
 I thought myself in heaven. [eyes,
 Such consolation did abound
 The like before I never found;
 My sins were all forgiven.
 And now I nothing more can say,
 Only, that while below I stay,
 May Jesus be my all.
 My heart's desire and prayer is still
 For grace and strength to do his will
 Till he from earth shall call.
 B. GATWARD.

SPIRITUAL WANTS.

Dear Saviour, wilt thou condescend
 My supplication to attend?
 Where can I go but unto thee,
 With all my wants and misery?
 I want more liberty in prayer,
 I want to find thy presence there,
 I want more spiritual hope within,
 I want to feel less love to sin.
 I want thee as my hiding place,
 I want some tokens of thy grace,
 I want thy rich atoning blood
 To reconcile my soul to God.
 I want to feel more love to thee,
 I want from bondage to be free,
 Rochester, Kent.

I want to hear thy pardoning voice
 To make my drooping soul rejoice.
 I want to have my faith increased,
 From doubts and fears to be released;
 I want to know I'm in the way
 That leads to everlasting day.
 I want thy smiling face to see
 When at thy throne I bend the knee;
 I want to feel thy love divine
 To melt and break this heart of mine.
 Lord, all my wants thou knowest well,
 For they are more than I can tell;
 But all may be comprised in this,
 Assurance of eternal bliss.
 A POOR HING

THE TRIED STONE.

"Therefore, saith the Lord God, Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation, a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner stone, a sure foundation; he that believeth shall not make haste."—
 Isa. xxviii. 16.

The Stone which the builders rejected with scorn
 Now proves to the guilty, the lost, and forlorn,
 A safe place of refuge where sinners do hide,
 And shelter in Jesus, though once crucified.
 Those builders of old had a stone of their own,
 A Babel to climb though Moses may frown;
 Though justice may threaten their souls to arrest,
 To work go those builders, and each does his best.

To lay a foundation on nature's quicksands,
 Their building's erected by nature's weak hands;
 They make their atonement, their victims provide,
 They rest on their duties, and feed on their pride.
 Those builders a stumbling block prove to the poor,
 Who wait with tired patience at mercy's strait door,
 Who see their perfection all brought to an end;
 By sin they're defiled, and in vain strive to mend.
 This Stone has been tried with ways most perverse,
 With sins and foul crimes and all the Law's curse,
 But Jesus their husband, their brother, and friend,
 Proves a Stone to his people; his love has no end.
 None ever can sink who build on this Stone;
 Through life's dreary maze he still proves to his own
 A steadfast foundation, chief corner, and friend;
 A place for their shelter his arm he will lend.
 Poor sinners, when hunted by sin, death, and hell,
 Look up to your Jesus who conquer'd and fell;
 Your work of salvation by him is complete;
 Then bow down before him, lie low at his feet.
 Come, sensible sinners, with crimes of deep hue,
 Your Saviour now reigns in glory for you;
 Bright mansions and thrones are provided above
 Which you shall inherit, and feast on his love.

Trowbridge, July 12, 1842.

ONCE AN ATHEIST.

A NEW YEAR'S GIFT TO THE SPOUSE OF CHRIST.

Deep in the ditch of death, but loath to know
 The thousandth part of wickedness and woe;
 A willing drudge to sin, by Satan hired,
 My flesh denied the truth that heaven inspired.
 Fetter'd and bound by sin's infernal chain,
 In league with death, I sought that monarch's reign;
 Drank down the poison, firmly held the woe,
 And madly ran to meet the dreadful blow.
 Till God in mercy ope'd my death-closed eyes
 Upon the brink of hell, O sad surprise!
 Destruction greatly shook my guilty soul,
 Nor could my cries the waves of wrath control.
 Thus sunk beneath conviction's fierce array,
 God's arrows, winged from Sinai, found their way
 Into my heart, stirred up the mischief there;
 My sin-stung conscience sank in deep despair.
 But Christ came by with garments roll'd in blood,
 And round my soul, as near in love he stood,
 He threw a robe of strange, yet matchless kind,
 And hurl'd my sorrows to the stormy wind.
 Thus God reveal'd his godlike righteousness,
 And put it on, my court and wedding dress.
 My soul, in this array'd, was proud to sing,
 And envied not prince, prophet, priest, or king.
 Near twenty years have since that time gone by;
 Those twenty years prove earth and men a lie;
 For here do hell and death abound within;
 So hell's the sire of death, and death's the child of sin.
 This makes me look on sinners, rich and poor,
 Whose gods are men themselves, or worldly ore;

Whose paths volcanoes shake each step they tread,
And darkness guides their feet among the dead.

Thus different minds and different passions move,
Groveling in earth, they slight the joys above;
But Christians, called by grace, must die to live,
And to their Lord their whole affections give.

Idolatry besets their roving heart;
With righteous self they find it hard to part;
Snarers catch their feet, destruction lies in wait;
Each day its trial brings, and every hour its bait.

The more they live to God, the more they see
The hellish monsters roaming after prey,
Leap from the deep recesses of their heart,
And roar till faith seems almost to depart.

Affrighted, "O," they cry, "can grace reign here?"
It does, the Spirit breathes, and stills their fear.
Spoil'd, and cast down, Satan no longer reigns,
Since sovereign grace the right of heaven maintains.

Through this wild desert, full of mighty foes,
No one but God could guide and interpose;
Ten thousand gins, ten thousand snares shall prove
The unfathomed mines of everlasting love.

Jesus their Lord has trod the path of death,
That ransom'd souls might live a life of faith.
Nor will he thank one soul for labour shown;
All human worth is hostile to his crown.

Divine perfection shines in Jesus' face,
In all his works, but most in works of grace;
Creation's colours fade in grace's dyes,
As each saved soul Immanuel's beauty eyes.

Then let us search these mines this year to come,
Nor be afraid of what our prayers bring home;
If sins uncovered drive us to the Lamb,
We shall but deeper feel to speak his fame.

Dying to nature, grace shall yield supplies;
Though prayer obtained, faith bids new joys arise;
Urged on by need, we wrestle hard in prayer,
And, bless'd with answers, God's own secret share.

But hell will most assail where God has shone;
Fear not, my brethren, boldly venture on;
Nor think it strange that you must hated be,
The world and Belial never can agree.

Come out! be bolder as affliction grows;
Let tongue, and heart, and life, and soul oppose
A fleshly Christ that world and devils share;
This will produce a crooked sweet new year.

Then let despair, and doubts, and fears distress,
And poverty and pain o'erwhelming press,
Our Christ is Lord of lords, and King of kings,
Our souls are safe beneath his balmy wings.

Before his sacred feet all things must bow,
Mountains of sin and sorrow downward flow;
In every evil we shall find some good,
Till heaven declares what earth in silence view'd.

THE
GOSPEL STANDARD,
OR,
FEEBLE CHRISTIAN'S SUPPORT.

"Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness; for they shall be filled."—Matt. v. 6.

"Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began."—2 Tim. i. 9.

"The election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded."—Rom. xi. 7.

"If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest.—And they went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch; and he baptized him.—In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost."—Acts viii. 37, 38; Matt. xxviii. 19.

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THE BLESSEDNESS OF WAITING AT WISDOM'S
GATES. A SERMON.

"Blessed is the man that heareth me; watching daily at my gates; waiting at the posts of my doors."—Prov. viii. 34.

(Concluded from page 11.)

II. But another thing is said of the blessed man. He does more than hear Wisdom's voice; he watches at Wisdom's gates. "Blessed is the man that heareth me, watching daily at my gates."

And what are these gates, at which the blessed man watcheth? By Wisdom's gates I understand those places where Wisdom speaks by those whom she calls her maidens—ministers, called and taught by the Spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Jesus. Among the Jews, counsels were held in the gates of the city; causes were heard and decided, and judgment was given; the oppressors were condemned, and the oppressed were delivered; property was redeemed, and contracts were entered into. So, also, in Wisdom's gates, where Wisdom presides and speaks, teaches and directs, these things, spiritually, are done, and heavenly business is transacted. At her gates she assembles and gathers together her children, to speak to them, and to give them good counsel. Here she reveals the secrets of their hearts; passes judgment upon what is false and evil; takes away their rotten props; drives them out of their refuges of lies; exposes the deceit of their hearts; opens them to receive the truth, and to attend unto the things that are spoken by her; brings redemption into the soul; saves it from the oppressor, from the delusions of Satan, and the accusations of conscience; and sweetly reveals her pardon and peace. Here she strengthens the weak hands, and con-

firm the feeble knees ; comforts the distressed ; satiates the longing soul ; fills the empty soul with good things ; opens blind eyes ; unstops deaf ears ; circumcises the heart ; and makes the lame to leap as a hart, and the tongue of the dumb to sing. Here righteous judgment is given ; a true balance is held, and right and just weights are put therein ; and the Lord is known to be a God of judgments, by whom actions are weighed. These are the gates of righteousness, the gates of wisdom ; and here the righteous resort, and here the blessed man *watches*.

He *watches*. He does not go out of form, or custom, or merely to hear a fine orator, or to satisfy conscience. No ; he *watches*. As the criminal on the gallows watches and strains his eyes, looking to the skirts of the crowd and to the distant hills, if peradventure he may see the messenger of mercy, despatched from the king's presence with the wished-for reprieve ; as the sick patient anxiously looks towards the door, in expectation of the far-famed physician ; as the shipwrecked mariner watches the dim spot in the horizon, in hopes it may prove to be a sail approaching for his deliverance ; as the suitor watches the face of him to whom he presents his petition, or the beggar the opening of the gate in hopes of receiving an alms ; even so does the blessed man watch at Wisdom's gates. He watches for some token for good ; some message of peace ; some sweet consolation ; some sensible and powerful manifestation of love and freedom, mercy and grace ; some interpretation of his case, and unravelling of his dark and intricate experience ; some light on his path ; some crumbs from the bread of life ; some shinings and beams from the Sun of righteousness ; some instructions in righteousness ; some promises of good things ; some proof that his spots are the spots of God's children, that he is not deceived, that he is in the way of life, and that he is among the jewels of the Lord. He watches attentively, he longs earnestly for these blessings. He goes to Wisdom's gates in hopes of hearing glad tidings ; of being filled and rejoiced ; of having pardon and peace sealed in his heart ; of hearing Wisdom's voice, seeing her arm revealed, feeling her healing power, experiencing her deliverance, and feeding upon her soul-satisfying bounty of goodness. He cares not for empty words, but for power ; not to have his judgment only informed, but to have his heart affected ; not to be seen of man, but to see the Lord's face, and to have the light of his countenance lifted up upon him.

Thus he watches at Wisdom's gates, in expectation of seeing and receiving from her hand a good and perfect gift. "Blessed is the man that *heareth me*, that watcheth *daily* at my gates."

The blessed man is said to attend *DAILY*, to hear and watch for Wisdom. Thus these blessed watchers watch daily, and wait for some hope, some comfort, some promise, some light and blessing from Wisdom. They are found at Wisdom's gates as often as they are open, and they are able to come. There is no need to exhort them to go there. They require no entreaties. They are hungry, and want food ; needy and poor, and want to be enriched ; naked, and want clothing ; cold, and want to be warmed ; miserable,

and want to be comforted ; guilty, and want to be pardoned. They do not mind walking a few miles to hear the word, for the desire of their soul is towards it. They endure affliction, and watch continually, sometimes with more, and sometimes with less fervour. Those are very unlike Wisdom's watching children, who can be kept from hearing and watching because the road is long and rough, the weather cold or damp, or because some trifling obstacle is in the way. But observe the word "*my*." "That watcheth daily at *my* gates." "*My* sheep hear *my* voice, and a stranger they will not follow," saith Jesus. Thus blessed hearers and blessed watchers cannot sit under a legal, or dry doctrinal ministry, in which Wisdom's voice is not heard, and be satisfied therewith. Though they would fain fill their belly with the husks which the swine do eat, they cannot. It will not do for them ; they must have "clean provender, which hath been winnowed with the shovel and with the fan." (Isa. xxx. 24.) They cannot sit under a dead minister, a man of Belial, (2 Sam. xxiii. 6, 7,) who exalts the creature, and exhorts him to do what he feels he cannot do ; for he has "the sentence of death" in himself, that he should not trust in himself. (2 Cor. i. 9.) The blessed hearers and watchers will never be content with a legal preacher, or a dry though correct letter preacher. He wants power, unction, experience, interpretation of his case, and to have the footsteps of the flock (Song i. 8) traced out, that he may go his way forth by them. There are thousands who are very attentive and regular at their churches and chapels, are very fond of being there early, and never miss when the doors are open, who are far from being among the number of the BLESSED *hearers* and *watchers*, for they can hear and watch like strangers, which blessed hearers and watchers cannot do. They can delight in the gates of Satan, transformed into an angel of light ; (2 Cor. xi. 14 ;) but blessed hearers and watchers can approve of Wisdom's gates only.

"Blessed is the man that heareth me, that watcheth at my gates, that waiteth at the posts of my *doors*."

Here is another mark of a blessed man : he *waits* at the posts of Wisdom's *doors*. But what are those doors ? A door is that which we pass through to obtain entrance into a house, chamber, or private enclosure, and is the only lawful and proper inlet to those who come in a direct and right way. The blessed Jesus says of himself, "I am the door," implying that none can enter into the fold, or bond of the covenant, but through him. They must not only have a sight of him afar off, but an experience of nearness to and entry into him, ere they can, as his sheep, lie down and feed in the fold of the covenant of grace, and delight themselves in God's everlasting, electing, redeeming, renewing, and preserving love. Christ is himself the Covenant, as it is said in Isaiah xlii. 6 ; and he is one of the divine Covenanters. (Zech. ix. 11.) In him are hid all the covenant stores of wisdom and knowledge, salvation and righteousness, mercy and truth, peace and love. Therefore, the soul that would enjoy these blessings must have more than a letter knowledge of them. He must handle and enjoy, taste and feast on them ; and this he cannot do until, by the blessed Spirit, he has such a revelation of Jesus as to assure him he

is "a man in Christ." The blessed man, that hears Wisdom and watches at her gates, at which are laid up all manner of precious fruits, (Song vii. 13,) knows and feels this; he has such a savour of the preciousness which Jesus is and has in himself, that he pants after the enjoyment thereof. He is not content to go about Zion, and to mark her walls and bulwarks, as thousands are; but he wants to find an entrance into Zion, to be brought into the citadel of safety, and the banqueting house of love; and therefore his eyes are up unto the Lord. (Ps. cxxiii. 1, 2.) He is "looking unto Jesus," (Heb. xii. 2,) and waiting with anxiety and longing desires, in hopes that he will put forth his hand, and take him in to him, as Noah put forth his hand, and took into the ark the dove, (Gen. viii. 9,) which had been fluttering over the waste of waters and drowned bodies, and could find no rest for the sole of her foot; not being able to rest on that which had destroyed so many, nor on the corruption which floated on every side. He waits, and knocks also, at the posts of the doors of love, mercy, and salvation. He knows what they are in the letter, and has sometimes had glimpses and rays of the Sun of righteousness darting through them into his soul. He has been very near the free enjoyment of what his soul desires, even at the posts. But he wants more than this; he wants to find an entrance into the doors, by assurance entering into him. He wants the witness of the Spirit, and the love of God shed abroad in his heart by the Holy Ghost. For these he begs and knocks, with sighs and groans, and hungerings and thirstings. Sometimes he fears the doors will never be opened to him, he is so vile, and foul, and unbelieving, and hard-hearted. He sees there is a "door of faith," (Acts xiv. 27,) and a "door of hope," (Hos. ii. 15,) and hears that they are opened to waiting and troubled souls in the wilderness. (Hos. ii. 14.) But he must have more than *hearing these things* as truths, and blessed realities; he must enjoy and enter into them as such.

Now such a waiter has faith in Christ; but it is only like a drop of oil under the muddy water, which is struggling to rise to the top, or like a bladder or cork caught in the sea-weeds, and held down thereby. Though it is in its nature to rise and ascend, it cannot. He has, then, faith to believe his need of these things, and to cry to the dear Lord to open to him, to let him in. He has faith and hope sufficient to keep him knocking and calling for admission; like a storm-beaten and shivering traveller at the door of an inn, the keeper whereof is in bed and asleep, and who, if he hears his voice, appears not inclined to rise and open to him. He waits for God to enable him to receive "the end of his faith, the salvation of his soul;" (1 Pet. i. 9;) to convince him that he has "faith of the operation of God." (Col. ii. 12.) He cannot conclude that he has true faith, and that his is a good hope through grace, (2 Thess. ii. 16,) till he can feel thereby assured he is elected, and saved, and born of God. False professors, who are left-hand goats and not right-hand sheep, and so never hear the voice of Wisdom, get into the full assurance of faith very easily. Nothing is more easy to them. They say, "you have only to believe." But *only to believe is as impossible*

to Wisdom's waiting children, as for them to grasp the whole firmament with their hands, or to lay hold upon and enter into the sun. They feel their helplessness, weakness, unbelief, darkness, and blindness. They are like wayfaring men, who, although they may perchance be in the right way, cannot be assured thereof, because all behind and before, above and around them, is thick darkness; and they know not where they are, and are afraid to proceed, or go backwards or forwards, lest they should fall into a bog, or pit, or over a precipice; but they call and shout, in hopes of being heard, and directed in the way. They stand still, and wait and watch for the break of day, for the light to visit them. Thus Wisdom's watching, waiting children feel what David was experiencing when he said, "Lord, hear my voice, let thine ears be attentive to the voice of my supplications. If thou, Lord, shouldst mark iniquities, O Lord, who shall stand? But there is forgiveness with thee, that thou mayest be feared. I wait for the Lord, my soul doth wait, and in his word do I hope. My soul waiteth for the Lord, more than they that watch for the morning; I say, more than they that watch for the morning." (Ps. cxxx. 2-6.) Now a soul in this state is a blessed soul. He is a wise son; an heir of God, and a joint heir together with Christ. Though "under tutors and governors until the time appointed by the Father," (Gal. iv. 2,) yet is he a true son, and not a bastard; (Hab. xii. 8;) although he is but at the posts of Wisdom's doors, holding on by only a little hope, a little strength, a little light, a something which will not let him give up watching, but which keeps him looking and watching for the morning, for the day star to arise in his heart, (2 Pet. i. 19,) and the Sun of righteousness with healing in his wings, (Mal. iv. 2), he is manifestly, though not to himself, one of God's children; yea, though he is like the chapped ground, which, parched with the drougths of summer, cleaves into deep fissures, and can only open its many mouths, and gape for the softening, refreshing, and reviving rain. For it is the blessed Spirit who has taught him that without Jesus he can do nothing; and that has made him open his mouth wide, that he might fill it. (Ps. lxxxi. 10.) He may wait long, and seemingly in vain; but in the set time (Ps. cii. 13) God will pour water upon him that is thirsty, and floods upon the dry ground. (Isa. xlv. 3.) He will show him that he has set before him an open door, and no man can shut it; (Rev. iii. 8,) while, like Hannah, he speaks and prays only in his heart. (1 Sam. i. 13.) God hears the voice of trembling, of fear, and not of peace. (Jer. xxx. 5.) Wisdom sees him at the posts of her doors, though he cannot see that Wisdom observes or cares for him. Wisdom will keep him watching as long as it is good for him, but not a moment longer. There is a "set time to favour Zion," and it cannot be hastened or retarded. The vision, saith the Lord, is for an appointed time, but at the end it shall speak, and not lie. Though it tarry, wait for it; because it will surely come, it will not tarry. (Hab. ii. 3.) Those who, like Simeon, are found waiting for the consolation of Israel, (Luke ii. 25,) like Simeon will, ere the earthly house of their tabernacle be dissolved, be blessed with holding their Saviour in the arms of their faith, and will be enabled

to say, "Lord, now lettest thou (or *now* thou lettest) thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word, for mine eyes have seen thy salvation." (Luke ii. 28—30.)

Thus a waiting soul is a blessed soul. "*Blessed is (not shall be) the man that feareth me, that watcheth at my gates, that waiteth at the posts of my doors.*" He is a saved soul, though he cannot say *my* God and *my* Saviour. He is not blessed because he hears, and watches, and waits; but because he is blessed, therefore a hearing, watching, and waiting spirit is given him. Patience is the fruit of the Spirit, and the Spirit puts forth no fruits but in elect souls. He who groans within himself, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of the body, (that is, who waits till he shall be brought into the full enjoyment of the redemption of his body, which is redeemed as well as his soul; or who waits, longing to be rid of his body of death and corruption; who waits, desiring to be freed from sin, and to enjoy the full fruition of the adoption of the sons of God,) is a blessed man. (Rom. viii. 23.) And so is the man who, though sorely oppressed and cast down, is not destroyed, nor bereft of hope, nor able to consent to evil, but endures temptation. (James i. 12.) "*Blessed is every one that feareth the Lord.*" (Ps. cxxviii. 1.) "*Blessed are the poor in spirit, for their's is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted. Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth. Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled. Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy. Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called the children of God. Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are ye when men shall revile you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely for my sake; rejoice, and be exceeding glad, for great is your reward in heaven, for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you.*" (Matt. v. 3—12.) Now in some one or more of these states all who are born of God are found; and all such, though differing in the depth of their feelings and experience, are blessed persons, and hear Wisdom, (not the mere words of man,) nor are taken up with fine, empty oratory; not hear this or that good man, for Wisdom saith, "*Blessed is the man that heareth me; that watcheth (not loungeth listlessly) at my gates, that waiteth at the posts of my doors.*"

Happy, blessed man that waits in the spirit for Jesus! God says he is blessed. He *has* blessed him, and none can curse him; neither Satan, nor the law, nor sin, nor man. *Blessed is every one that blesseth him, and cursed is he that curseth him.* God will never be tired, however long the time may be to the watching, hearing soul. He may fear he will be cut off, but God declares he will preserve and keep him. "*He that trusteth in the Lord shall never be confounded or put to shame;*" and therefore will the Lord wait, that he may be gracious unto you, and therefore will he be exalted, that he may have mercy upon you. For the Lord is a God of judgment, and leads in the way of righteousness, and in the midst of the paths of judgment. (Prov. viii. 20.) "*Blessed are all they that wait for him.*" (Isa. xxx. 18.)

A DIALOGUE BETWEEN JAMES AND SAMUEL.

JAMES. Well, friend Samuel, I am glad to find you at home.

SAMUEL. I am *here*, to be sure, but to be *at home*, in the best sense of the word, is a great matter.

J. What do you call "being at home," in the best sense of the word?

S. Why, on this side ultimate glory, a sweet enjoyment of the love of God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost, by a vital faith in the glorious Person, blood, and obedience, love and loveliness, fulness, beauty, bliss and blessedness of the Lord Jesus Christ as my own Lord and Saviour, with the world under my feet; experiencing in my heart a real feeling sense of sin being drowned in the sea of the love and blood of Christ; having my conscience cleansed from guilt and filth, by a precious application of the atonement, and my person clothed with the King's robe of righteousness; my soul being blessedly bedewed with the dew of heaven, and my heart, head, and tongue anointed with the holy anointing; experiencing the solemn joy of the Holy Ghost resting upon my spirit, and a Three-One God manifestly seated in my conscience, enabling me truly to say, "My fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son, the Lord Jesus Christ;" and so to have vital, spiritual intercourse with the Lord of life and glory;—this I should call "being at home."

J. If that is "being at home," I really should like to be with you there; but I fear that it does not fall to the lot of most of God's people to be long at a time in that blessed frame of mind. One thing, however, I can say, it is truly blessed to be there at all, even though it be but for a few moments at a time.

S. In very deed it is; and while that is the case, the world can find no charms for the soul, for the Lord of life and glory is truly felt and experienced as our All and in all.

J. Yes, so it is. But, friend Samuel, there are a few subjects upon which I should like to have a little conversation with you, if agreeable.

S. What are they, friend James? I have a little leisure time to-night, and if they be things concerning God and eternity, I hope we may spend an hour to our mutual profit.

J. Well, then, the first subject I wish at this time to speak upon is, the solemn subject of eternal, absolute, sovereign, and unconditional election.

S. Really, James, you begin upon high ground. How, in the name of a good conscience, came you to begin so high?

J. I have several reasons for it.

S. Name them.

J. First, then, there was a time when I could not believe that doctrine to be true, and the very thought of it was horrifying to my soul; for I felt myself such an unholy, ungodly sinner, that I believed if the doctrine of election was a truth I must perish for ever, for I felt sure that the Lord would not elect one so awfully vile as

I. Sometimes a fear of its being a truth would dart into my mind, and sink me deeper into woe, when I felt as if I abhorred both the doctrine and those that maintained it; and it appeared as if it rushed in upon me for the purpose of driving me to distraction. I never can forget the dreadful horrors that I have felt in my soul at these times.

S. That was a very painful state of mind to be in; nevertheless, you are not the only one who has been there. But how did the matter end?

J. Why, as I said before, I was almost distracted. At times I laboured hard to keep the law, abstain from sin, and please the Lord. I promised and vowed, and then broke my promises and vows. I then tried to be more watchful and more cautious, and I groaned, and sighed, and mourned, and wished myself anything rather than a being with an immortal soul, accountable to a holy and just God. But whatever I said, or thought, or did, I found myself a guilty sinner, nor could I, long together, rise one hair's breadth above that; and if ever I did so for one moment, I soon felt that it was all delusion; so that, in reality, I had no hope left on the ground of being good, or doing good. Indeed, at times I felt my poor soul sink a thousand fathoms in a moment, and I have wondered that I was out of hell.

S. Well, James, but what has all this to do with the doctrine of election? I thought you wished to speak upon that solemn subject.

J. So I do, and if my friend Samuel will have a little patience with me, I shall come to the point by and by. But as you wished to know my reasons for introducing the subject, I really must give them in my own way, or I cannot give them at all.

S. Do not feel hurt, friend James; I have felt a degree of gladness in hearing the statement you have given, therefore proceed.

J. Well, then, from feeling a hatred to the doctrine of election, and trembling for fear it should be true, believing that if it was a truth I must be damned, I really was brought to feel that if it was not a truth, and that if the whole of salvation was not absolutely free, I must sink into black despair for ever.

S. Strange, vastly strange. How came that about?

J. I really felt that if the Lord did not save me wholly and entirely by grace, from first to last, I could never be saved; for I felt that all I was, and thought, and did, was sin; and when I was told that God elected men on the ground of conditions, viz., their repenting and believing, making and keeping themselves holy, and proving faithful to grace, I felt sure that conditional election left me no hope, for I was such a poor weak, vile, detestable wretch, that I could only add sin to sin, and therefore could have no hope in anything depending upon me. Sometimes I felt a little hope spring up in my mind from that blessed portion of God's word: "For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost." (Luke xix. 10.) I felt that I was completely lost, nor was I able to help myself, which led me to cry vehemently to the Lord for mercy, and

to pray that his gracious Majesty would be pleased to seek and save me. Then a sudden thought would dart into my mind that I was too vile a reptile for the Lord to have anything to do with, except to damn me, and I was quite sure that I deserved it. But still I could not forbear crying for mercy; and I now believe that at that time the blessed Spirit helped me, and I was led to say, "Lord, if it will not dishonour thy blessed Majesty to save such a wretch as I, do, in thy rich grace, condescend to have mercy upon me, and save me." That blessed portion of God's word now came into my mind with a small degree of hope and comfort: "Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them." (Heb. vii. 25.)

S. My dear friend, excuse me; but there is some part of your statement so much like the dealings of the Lord with me, that I cannot help speaking. But did not that blessed text set your soul quite at rest?

J. No, friend Samuel, it did not, for it did not at that time come with sufficient power to do that; yet, as I said before, there was a little hope and sweetness accompanying it. But it appeared as if Satan was aware that the dear Lord was about to deliver me, and therefore he made a desperate struggle to plunge me still deeper into woe. He stirred up in me a whole host of hard thoughts against God, and I felt something in me saying, "It was cruel in the Lord to suffer me to go on in sin, and render myself so vile and wretched, in order that he might damn me at last." With this, some horrid blasphemies rose up in my poor distracted mind, which are too dreadful to name, and it appeared to me as though I was filled with the wrath and confusion of devils. I trembled with agony, and cried out, "What am I? What am I?" The distress I felt I never can describe, yet still there was an internal groaning for mercy, and those blessed words, "He is able to save to the uttermost," came again and again, accompanied with a degree of hope. The words, "to the uttermost, to the uttermost," kept sounding in my mind repeatedly, and the enemy appeared as if he had lost a great measure of his power, and was about to retreat; but he gave another desperate spring, and said, "Yes, he is able to save to the uttermost all them that come to God by him, but that is not you, for you cannot go to God by him. You are a dead lump of sin, filth, and guilt, and cannot move one step towards God." At this I was completely confounded, for it was too true for me to be able to deny it. How to describe my feelings then I know not, for I had a little hope accompanied with a whole host of fears and dreadful feelings. I staggered and trembled, and, in deep groans, cried, "O that I could but go to God by Jesus Christ! but I cannot, and I fear I shall never be saved." Still, I could not help crying for mercy; for never did any poor wretch feel the need of mercy more than I did at that time; and the dear Lord was pleased to bring to my distressed mind, with sweetness and power, this portion of his word: "No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him." (John

vi. 44.) With this I felt my soul powerfully drawn out to cry with all my heart, "O Lord, draw me, for I cannot come of myself;" and then the Lord spoke powerfully to my conscience, "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out." (John vi. 37.) With this, I, by a vital faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, saw and felt such a beauty and glory in Him, that I appeared wrapped up in love to his glorious Majesty, and felt a wonderful clinging to him, and with my whole heart said, "Draw me, Lord, and I will run after thee," and instantly these blessed words came with divine light, life, love, and power: "The blood of Jesus Christ, his Son, cleanseth us from all sin;" and it was followed with that blessed text: "It is finished." The enemy now fled, and my guilt disappeared; for the blessed words, "Cleanseth from all sin," and "It is finished," put all my fears and foes to flight, and my very soul leaped and sung for joy. I could in very deed say, "He loved me, and gave himself for me;" and again, "The Lord hath delivered me, a poor wretched worm, in affliction, and opened mine ears in oppression, and hath removed me out of the strait into a broad place, where there was no straitness, and he hath set upon the table of my conscience that which was full of fatness." (Job xxxvi. 15, 16.) I felt my soul burst forth into a solemn song of praise, and I wished heaven and earth to unite with me, saying, "Sing, O ye heavens, for the Lord hath done it! shout, ye lower parts of the earth; break forth into singing, ye mountains, O forest, and every tree therein; for the Lord hath redeemed Jacob, and glorified himself in Israel." (Isa. xlv. 23.) Indeed, I found such freedom with the Lord, and such sweetness and power in addressing his blessed Majesty, that I was quite astonished. I could call him my Friend, my Portion, and my everlasting All; and I was enabled to use very familiar language with the Lord, for I appeared to be swallowed up in wonder, love, and praise.

S. Your statement quite warms my soul, and, in some measure, carries me more than fifty years back; for about that time, through the riches of God's grace, I walked much in the same path, consequently, I can feelingly believe the whole of what you have related. But have you not wandered from the subject with which you started, viz., election?

J. Wandered from election! no, my friend, I am just getting at it, and tasting a little of its sweetness.

S. Well then, my brother, do proceed.

(To be continued in our next.)

"WHO IS A GOD LIKE UNTO THEE?"

My very dear and affectionate Friend in the everlasting Covenant of Grace and Mercy,—May grace and mercy, peace and love, be multiplied to thee from God the Father, through God the Son, by the Eternal Spirit! I received your kind and affectionate letter this morning, which makes the third that I have had from you

since I wrote to you last, and for which I ought to be ashamed. But, my dear tried friend, if I have committed an offence you must forgive me; for I have had so much to do with myself, and with men, sin, and devils, that I have at times thought I would write no more; no, nor yet preach any more. But God is true, and I am still alive and out of hell, and I believe that I never shall be in that hell where devils and damned spirits will be to all eternity; for the dear Lord hath this morning filled my soul with laughter and my tongue with joy, and hath led my soul to see its safety in the blessed Jesus, and how he hath taken care of me under every trying temptation, and under all the scandal and persecutions of professors and profane. I can say with confidence that the Lord hath ever brought me through them all in an honourable way, and I desire to speak it to his honour and glory; for the eternal God in Christ hath made manifest his fatherly care and tender compassion towards me, a sinful and rebellious wretch, and hath brought me through floods and flames. The pits that others have digged for me they have fallen into themselves; the traps that mine enemies have set to catch me they have themselves been taken in; and the gallows that the Hamans have prepared to hang me on they have been hanged on themselves. Those Hamans have ever wanted all the honour to be conferred upon themselves, but they shall not have it from me. For it is my soul's desire to render honour to whom honour is due, and that is to God the Father, for loving the poor cobbler in Christ with an everlasting love; and the same equal honour unto God the Son, for redeeming my lost and guilty soul from the curse of a broken law, and from all iniquity, transgression, and sin; and unto God the Holy Ghost is the same honour due, for quickening my dead soul into life, and for revealing somewhat of the mystery of godliness unto my poor, lost, and yet saved soul. Ah! my dear friend, my soul must talk about these things when I feel them; and blessed be the dear Spirit of all grace and mercy, he has never left my soul to itself, from the very day that he quickened me into life up to the present moment. My soul feels it at this time, and when my soul feels it I am constrained to believe it; for the love of Christ, shed abroad in the heart by the Holy Ghost, constrains an elect soul to love the Trinity of Persons in one God.

You said in your letter this morning that you had heard this week from our dear friend H—, of Bristol, and that you understood I had been in great trouble, but did not know whether it was in soul matters, or in family affairs, or in Providence. Well, I will try and tell you as well as I can blunder it out, for I am sure that you already know something about the secret. It is not in my family affairs, for the dear Lord hath greatly blessed me in my small family, and my soul has greatly blessed my covenant God since I saw you last. The same day that I parted from you at the Bristol station, on my way to Exeter on the coach, we passed a house at which, I was told, the woman who resided there had had fourteen children in ten years. The house stood alone, and there were a number of children about it

nearly of a size ; it was said that she had had twins five times. O how my soul was crumbled down at the dear feet of Jesus under a sense of God's goodness on every hand ! For I had been in such a terrible state of mind for many miles, and had had such a fit of rebellion, that I knew not what to do with myself to retain my anger ; but about two miles before we came to this house, on the top of the barren hills, the dear Lord broke in upon my poor, rebellious, and troubled soul, so that all the devils and devilism were gone in a moment, and life, light, love, and peace flowed into my heart like a river. O how my soul did weep, and yet rejoice ! Tears of love and gratitude came up out of my heart, and ran sweetly down my face. I was obliged to hide my face to conceal my feelings, for on those hills the dear Lord showed me how good he had been to me and my family. And again, neither has it been any trouble in providence, for I have plenty of food and raiment ; and (I speak it to the honour of God) I do not owe a single shilling for food nor yet for raiment, no, nor yet for any thing else, except it be for a few weeks' rent. O my dear friend, the Lord hath led me back, since I have been scribbling these few lines, to the time when I was over head and ears in debt, and showed me how he enabled me to pay all I owed, so that no man can now open his mouth against me. If ever God dealt well, and tenderly, and generously with a poor, black, vile, and hell-deserving sinner, I am the man ; and my soul has felt it and does feel it, and has been this day filled with a feeling sense of God's goodness to me both in providence and in grace. And now, my dear friend, you see that my troubles have not been on this account ; and I will now tell you their real cause. That cause has been my devilish self ; for I have felt myself to be such a burden, that I have not known what to do between hardness of heart, deadness of soul, barrenness of spirit, darkness of mind, and lust, pride, covetousness, hypocrisy, blasphemy, craft, and unbelief, with a thousand other things that make my poor soul cry and groan, and roar and sigh. I sometimes fear that I shall be forced to give all up, and quit the field ; but to-day the Lord has given my soul to feel the victory over all my enemies, both in the world, and in my own heart, and also in hell.

Remember me to your dear pastor, and tell him that I met with many poor souls round P— who had been greatly blessed under his ministry, but who have never had an opportunity to speak to him. There was one man that heard him at S— Chapel more than twenty years ago. He had been in soul distress for some time ; and there the Lord met with him under your pastor, and brought him out sweetly. He came and saw me, and I felt quite at home with him.

That God the eternal Spirit may bless thee and shine upon thee, and lift up the light of his dear countenance upon thee, and open up to thee Christ in his love, blood, grace, and righteousness, and keep thee in the hour of powerful temptation, is the prayer of thy friend in tribulation,

Pewsey, Nov. 5, 1842.

T. G.

**"MANY DAUGHTERS HAVE DONE VIRTUOUSLY,
BUT THOU EXCELLEST THEM ALL."—PROV. xxxi. 29.**

My dear Friend,—As you are almost the only person that I feel any heart in writing to, I beg you will excuse me troubling you occasionally. I have for the last few days been ploughing in a field not very pleasing, although profitable, because of truth. As the dear Lord is pleased to sift me, I in return sift others. The field to which I allude will be found in the text of Scripture, "Many daughters have done virtuously, but thou excellest them all." (Prov. xxxi. 29.)

How rational it is for men of all denominations to strive upon the ground of the law of works for salvation, for, if one's heart is unregenerated, it matters not where the head is. Darkness and death are sure to reign, where ignorance of God and of Christ, and sin prevail. It is not the Arminian in profession, but the Arminian in possession that maintains war against the gospel of the free grace of God; and though the head may be reconciled to the doctrines of grace, yea, though it should rejoice in them, yet the enmity of the human heart unslain will mutter perverseness against Jehovah's plan.

I have, upon these considerations, been led to inquire wherein virtue, real virtue, consists. It appears, from the reading of the Scriptures, that there is what may be called moral virtue in opposition to vice, in a moral sense; and there is that also conveyed by the term virtue which expresses power, sap, or nutriment derived. (See Luke viii. 46.) Upon this two-fold view of the word, I have been led to understand the text, "Many daughters have done virtuously," &c. In thinking upon the subject, my feelings have been touched a little with the following things: First, that as there are differences distinguished by our Lord respecting the branches in the vine, yet all branches, so there are differences distinguished between the virgins, yet all daughters. For instance, Babylon is called a virgin, because she had never been captured by a foreign enemy. So professors are called virgins or daughters, because they have never made any profession of religion except Christianity. These daughters are many, and they are distinguished by Solomon upon the ground of their doings, the same as in New Testament language, "Depart from me, ye workers." But the excellency of the bride consists not in her *works* only, but in her *gifts*. This is acknowledged by these very daughters: "My dove, my undefiled, is but one; she is the only one of her mother, she is the choice one of her that bare her; the daughters saw her, and blessed her; yea, the queens and the concubines, and they praised her." (Song vi. 9.) The foolish virgins also saw the excellency of oil, when their lamp of profession, in which they gloried, was gone out.

As the term "daughter" does not allude to the heathen mythology and the worshipping of idols, neither does it allude to those who care nothing about Christ, or the scriptures, or the gospel, but to those referred to by the prophet: "In that day seven women shall take hold of one man, saying, We will eat our own bread, and wear our own apparel; only (aye, *only*) let us be called by thy name, to

take away our reproach." (Isa. iv. 1.) Rome appears to be the elder daughter, and length of days has not taught her wisdom. Those who know the character of this Christian strumpet will wonder wherein she has done virtuously; but, notwithstanding her folly, there is something that deserves the name of moral virtue, at least, amongst some of her superstitious votaries. If this cannot be found in reality, such is her zeal for God, upon the law of works, that she thinks she does Him a service in condemning the just. And who can deny that her religion is outwardly Christian? and if so, she is a daughter, not of God, but of man. The will of the flesh, assisted by the devil, has full scope, granted from heaven, to fill up the measure of iniquity appointed, that wrath may come upon her to the utmost. The virtues, therefore, of this daughter consist in works, and she has thereof to glory, but not before God.

Another daughter is the Church established by law, a thing directly contrary to the true principles of the gospel of Jesus Christ. If the gospel is of God, and Paul was obliged to receive it as such, what parliamentary law in the whole world can possibly further such gracious designs of heaven's eternal bounty? Colleges and academies are aptly got up by the devil, through the instrumentality of man, as nurseries for this system. The virtues of this daughter may in some instances serve the purpose of external morality; and the Lord has made use of the zeal and property of many to circulate the Scriptures, as the pure word of God, for a savour of life unto life and of death unto death amongst those who probably otherwise would not have heard his name. But notwithstanding that some may hazard their lives and fortunes, they are still only admiring the lamp, and are forgetting the oil; they hang themselves upon the curtains of the bed, but never stay all night in the bosom; they are for ever publishing the banns, but never get beyond a single life. The virtues of such consist in a steady maintenance of Church and State, that having been the religion of their fathers. I speak not of all, but of the most zealous in this section of professors; and these can never sleep until duty is done, and the full tale brought in, and then, in their own conceit, they have enough and to spare. The King, the Calf, the robes, and the kiss are held in disdain by these virtuous elder-born, who never (in their own estimation) transgressed at any time. But in all this God is mocked, sin reigns in the heart untouched, Satan is abundantly gratified, and the creature is adored.

A third daughter is the sincere seeker of God and salvation upon the principle of personal interest and safety. There are many who will go to the very borders of the gospel Canaan, in order to provide against a rainy day, to whom Christ will say, "Who hath required this at your hands?" It were better for a man that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and he were cast into the sea, than for him to meddle with religion if it has never meddled with him; for he will certainly be some day used as the instrument of Satan to bring into the church heresy and schism, for which he will receive greater damnation. The virtues of these characters appear in their unwearied zeal for a length of time, as long as the novelty of the

thing lasts, and there is any food for the old man; they are first at prayer meetings, and at experience and exhortation meetings; they are full of talk, always light of heel, and their names frequently stand first on the lists of public or private charities; they are self-confident, seeking the applause of men, and loving to be called, "Rabbi, Rabbi." But is the zeal of such a substitute for the love of God in the heart? Is their sincerity a substitute for the fear of the Lord, by which men depart from iniquity? Is their warmth in contending for God a substitute for that meekness and quietness of spirit peculiar to those whom "the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from all sin?" "There is a generation that are pure in their own eyes, and yet is not washed from their filthiness." One reason why there are such characters in the church of God by profession is, that the poor child of God may remember, that when he first walked on the borders of the heavenly Canaan, there were some whose shoes he thought himself unworthy to bear, who are now the last; and he has reason to rejoice in that grace, in the light of heaven's glory, which he saw but dimly while in the wilderness. Another reason why Judases are in the church is, because God has a part for them to perform which would be a snare to his own children. But they "have done virtuously" in their own esteem, and in the esteem of some of God's children, who have often envied their gifts. These gain honour without gaining humility; they know the truth, but they were never made free by it; they run the race, but never win the prize; and they mimic every feature of the regenerate, and yet shall hear the words, "Depart from me, I never knew you!" Thus they shall be found trespassers, and not pilgrims; and although, by profession, they may be daughters of Christ, branches of the true Vine, and virgins carrying lamps, and may be able to say, with truth, that their religion began with love to God, or with conviction, yet it shall be found that they have no relationship with Christ, that they have thrust themselves amongst the branches of the Vine, and not sprung from its root, and that their lamps are trimmed by human wisdom, and are without oil. "Such is the way of an adulterous woman; she eateth, and wipeth her mouth, and saith, I have done no wickedness!" Many daughters have done morally and virtuously, and have been used of God to the service of his church, and to the maintenance of truth in the world; but, forasmuch as they did it not in faith, whatsoever is not of faith is sin. Therefore, thou one with Christ, thou one in the love of the Father, thou one in the Spirit with the Lord of hope and glory, thou, *thou* excellest them all!

"Then I returned, and saw that, under the sun, wisdom excelled folly as much as light excelled darkness." Therefore, in looking on the church in her excellency, I saw that she was chosen of God as an act of mere grace, pure grace; because he would form for himself a people that should show forth his praise by virtues which were not merely natural, or moral, or self-wrought, but which consist of a divine communication out of the fulness of Christ. This fulness is a fulness of grace and glory, springing efficiently from the divine Three, and proceeding powerfully, naturally, and without possibility of restraint,

out of that beneficent Being who maketh all; and it is called by the apostle Peter "the divine nature." For Deity is not communicable; but as that which flows naturally is an effect from some known cause, so the love of God springs from him, and is communicated to the elect, because God is love. Therefore the church is as the Holy Land, eternally chosen and set apart for the express purpose which God has purposed in himself. She must, through the immutability of his choice and purpose be made partaker of all the glory and all the grace that he purposes; and this is the sole cause of all the difference made on and for her behalf. "It is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that showeth mercy." This is the beginning of all her future excellency, this is why God has sworn that she excelleth all others, and by this she is made worthy of his regard and honour: because the Eternal beholds in his church, as in a glass, a reflection of his own everlasting image. This first step leads to every other step of her excellency over all others. For her sake the world was brought into existence; for her sake Christ took upon himself our human nature, and it is said "As the children (mark, the *children*) are partakers of flesh and blood: he himself likewise took part of the same." For her sake he was made sin; for her sake he was made a curse; for her sake the gospel is preached; and for her sake the world stands, and God is "long-suffering to us ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance."

(To be continued.)

TO THE PRAISE OF THE GLORY OF HIS GRACE.

My dear Friend,—Grace, mercy, and peace be multiplied! Your kind letter has been safely received. Accept our sincere thanks for the favour; for a favour we may well call it, after so long, very long a silence. It has pressed heavy on my mind at times, that my friend had forgotten his old acquaintance, his afflicted, despised, but not forsaken brother at B—; but as your affectionate epistle now before me proves to the contrary, and as you have invited me to send you a reply, as the Lord enables me I will therefore endeavour to do so; and if a divine unction attends the writing and reading of the same, you will know, in answer to your request, how it fares with your friend, and will bless the dear covenant God of Israel for his past and present mercies enjoyed, and for what is reserved for us above; as it is written, "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him."

Respecting myself, since we oftener corresponded, I have been the subject of many ups and downs, many declensions and quickenings, much misery and joy, many doubts and fears, many tremblings, much hardness of heart, many meltings of soul, many wandering and reclaimings, much backwardness, coldness, and indifference in private and public prayer; much holy boldness and heavenly freedom, comfort, nearness of access, communion with God; brokenness; many weepings, relentings, repentings, sighings, and

groanings at the throne of grace. Many mourning times in bonds and chains and fetters of iron, bound and shut up, and unable to come forth, struggling for liberty with bitter anguish, wailings, and repentings of soul, and fighting with unbelief, sin, guilt, manifold infirmities, and with many sorrows; and many triumphant seasons, rejoicing in the liberty of the sons of God; enjoying liberty to plead with him; liberty to prevail with him; liberty to praise him; liberty to receive from the fulness that is in Christ all that I feel I need; liberty to love him, to serve him, and to obey him; liberty to cry, "Abba, Father;" liberty to desire him to permit me to live and die at his dear feet, beneath the droppings of his love and blood; and have grace to glorify his dear name, in hope of living and reigning with him in his glory above, and sin no more; to see his face, and praise him for ever. Then shall "I be satisfied when I wake up in his likeness," and not before; for then shall my wants be fully, sweetly, and for ever supplied from him, the dear Christ of God, the fountain head, the spring and source of life, love, bliss, and blessedness divine; my joy, my hope, my heaven, my all! My losses then will be all made up, ten thousand fold, in the enjoyment of his presence and love, and all my crosses be exchanged for the crown which he shall give me at that glorious appointed day, now drawing nigh; an immortal weight of glory, designed for me, the chiefest of sinners, the vilest sinner out of hell; for me, for me! before time began. O what a miracle of grace am I! How can I refrain to weep? My dear friend, come and weep with me.

"With such a hope as this,
I'd give my life away;
And wait (and weep beneath the bliss)
The coronation day."

These are some of the outlines of what the Lord has been for years and is still bringing me through, to the praise of his glory! To be a Christian, my dear friend, is not so easy a thing as many men may and do think; yet how blessed a thing it is to be a Christian, an Israelite indeed, for there is such a sweetness flowing from the love of Christ enjoyed, mingling with all their sorrows and pains, that no pen can describe nor tongue can tell. Hence were the ancient martyrs, of blessed memory, borne up with triumph amidst the flames, and sang the high praises of God in the fire; and what can equal this to support and comfort the soul, amidst the troubles and sorrows of the way, in these latter days? It may well be said, "A stranger meddleth not with their joys." The joys of the Lord's saints the world does not know, nor does it know the sorrows they endure. It is true the worldling sees them gloomy, and often cast down; but, being ignorant of the secret, he says religion is a gloomy thing, and turns his scoffing head away from such hypocritical canters (as he calls them) with disgust, and joins his companions to take his fill of sin. And empty professors are worse; for they, having the form of godliness, but denying the power thereof, and having a little light in their heads, but no saving knowledge in their hearts, are able to trouble the true circumcision more than the openly profane are,

heaping upon them their slanders, lies, and sneers, which are very hard for flesh and blood to bear, and throwing at them, also, their secret darts, not a few ; and therewith try secretly, and openly too, to cheat, defraud, and injure them on every hand, while they seem to appear friendly, and smile in their faces as though they were so. O the vile hypocrisy of the human heart ! But to be able to say feelingly and rejoicingly, " None of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto me, so that I may win Christ and be found in him," how blessed ! But we must be in the enjoyment of his love indeed to do so ; or sure I am we cannot, but shall fret and murmur, and repine and rebel, and think we are dealt hardly with. And probably Providence seems to frown upon us on every side ; our designs are frustrated, our hopes are blasted, our expectations are cut off, our sins abound, guilt beclouds our evidence and shuts us up, our way is hedged up, our prayer is hid from the Lord and cannot prevail, our business is declining, our friends are failing, our property is melting away, our temporal needs are increasing, and, to close the tale of woe, sighs and groans wear away our time by day, and mingle with or prevent our repose by night. Do these things constitute part of the trial of faith ? and must faith be tried in this way, as though by fire ? Who then, I ask, would be a Christian, a professor of such a faith as this, a true and living faith, the faith of God's elect, were there not something most blessed behind the curtain, to be known, felt, and enjoyed, and better things still in prospect to come, which outweighs every trouble and affliction, and the fears of death itself ? I presume my friend will answer, " None." Then we need not wonder at the course the worldling chooses to pursue, and the judgment he forms upon the matter. To such all things are spoken in parables, but to God's dear saints he speaks plainly. He makes them learn his will, and know themselves, in the school of afflictions and in the path of tribulations ; hearing their groans as though he heard them not, and answering their cries, as it were, in the secret place of thunder, by seeming contraries ; opening up to them the hidden iniquities and deceits of their heart, breaking up the fountain of the great deep within, making them sick of themselves, of sin, and of the world, and to abhor and hate themselves, until they are a very pest in their own eyes, and groan with anguish of heart because of the abominations done within, because of the strummings they feel ; sin, lusting to envy, bringing them into captivity unto the law of sin and death, suffering the enemy to draw them aside, and their own hearts to deceive, allure, and often overcome them ; and chastening them with stroke after stroke for their departure from him till they are weary of life, and know the folly of trusting to their own hearts, or to an arm of flesh ; and till they are sick of their own ways, sick of their idols, and, esteeming all things here but vanity and vexation of spirit, turn with great desire to the stronghold, and repair to Jesus and ask him to let them die at his feet, rather than thus to live and thus to sin, and grieve him any more. Then the Lord's design is answered. They receive a little respite, and feel a cessation of arms ; atoning blood removes guilt once more from the conscience. They sing of

mercy and judgment; and say, with felt contrition and joy, "What have I any more to do with idols?" They apprehend Christ by faith; and know that he has fulfilled the law for them in their room and stead, not in judgment only, but in what they feel. They know his righteousness is imputed to them. The sentence of justification they feel within; peace, the effects thereof, sealed with blood, makes them dance for joy. They rest in Christ, and draw from his fulness; and cease from their hard bondage, their legal strivings, their worldly cares, and their unbecoming anxieties. They look forward with pleasure, wait in hope, and expect with joy. They weep, and tremble, and sing with triumph at the prospect of being with Christ for ever, to sin no more. In a word, they fly to take hold of, embrace, and enjoy a precious Christ, the sum and substance of the gospel and of all the promises, the sum total of their best desires; and bless the triune, covenant God of Israel "for his unspeakable gift."

I must now conclude. Pardon me, my dear friend, for detaining you so long, for when I had begun I could not tell how or when to leave off, until I had disclosed a summary of my feelings to you, in answer to your inquiries. I write not from theory, but from feeling. In many tears, therefore, I leave you to guess how it fares with me; but it is written, "Say ye to the righteous, it shall be well with him." And as it respects how our little cause is going on, what shall I say? for the thought rather tends to cast a gloom over my spirits. But my song, and boast, and joy is in the God of my salvation; for my soul's desires are going out to him, as unto the hills from whence cometh our help, for he, I know, can alter the scene when it pleases him. But what is the matter? say you. Enough to make my heart bleed before the Lord. We are now reduced to a very few indeed; but the smallness of our number does not so much grieve me, as I know that it is often the case that where the truth is preached many will not attend. But it is this that grieves me: I am convinced the Lord has had somewhat against us for a length of time, because we, collectively as a church, had left our first love. His dear fatherly, chastising hand has therefore, been sifting us again and again; so that now he has left us like a beacon on a hill. And what grieves me still more is, that the few who are left appear to have so little power with God in prevailing prayer. Our dear, sovereign, gracious Lord seems as if he only returned them answers into their own bosoms; so that, as a church, we seem to be like a standing water, but more inclined to go backward than forward. We are at peace amongst ourselves, (that is a mercy,) but for myself I cannot feel satisfied with a mere holding together. I want to see the Lord's arm made bare; I want to trace more unction, more heavenly dew descending upon us, more union and communion felt, more earnest wrestling of soul, and more travelling of spirit; then would my fainting heart have cause to hope that the time of the fulfilment of the promise was drawing nigh, which comforts and holds me up. The dear Lord so often blesses

me at his feet, that my heart, and soul, and tongue can unite to praise him, notwithstanding every discouragement, and sing in hope of seeing better days to come. The God of Israel grant me my request.

The Lord bless you and Mrs. E— with much of his presence, and bring you with us to his kingdom and glory at last.

Yours affectionately in the Lord,

A DEBTOR TO MERCY.

My very dear Brother in the path of life, and hard by or in the path of tribulation,—I have to tell you that I quickly got home, after I left F—; but on my return I got into water above my ankles. I found that my wife had caught a violent cold, and on Friday night last I thought she would remain here but a very short time longer. I tried to get near the Lord with my trouble, but could not do so as I wished; yet I leaned hard upon him notwithstanding, and got a clear view of his power and skill, and of his goodwill to his beloved and tried children. I knew my wife was one, though I had not power to call myself one too; yet I dared not call myself a reprobate. I wanted a word of promise of good from Him that hears the cry of the destitute, but could not obtain one. I got faint, and then fell asleep, and twice I awoke in a great fright. The second time, I heard my wife crying out to the great Physician. This gave me encouragement, and I soon lost my burden; and a short time after a very merciful alteration became visible in my wife.

Ah, brother, what a debtor to mercy I have felt myself to be since I parted from you last! May the dear Lord increase the sense of the same in your heart and mine! It comes through fire and water, stocks, traps, snares, and gins, unbelievings, sinnings, backslidings, revoltings, and a manifold mixture that you are not unacquainted with. Yet still the stone hangs in the air, the spark is kept alive in the flood, because of the promise, the oath, and the blood of our almighty, all-loving, unchanging God.

Yon see the enclosed; I need not do more than draw your attention to it. I shall be glad to see you, and to feel my dear Lord so near as to embrace him; as our old friend did when he said, "Now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, for mine eyes have seen thy salvation."—Yours in Him,

M—, 1841.

S. E.

THE SINNER'S FRIEND.

My dear brother Robert,—The God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, our dear elder Brother, has permitted and helped a poor wretch to draw near to him once more. I had been trying to get nigh to him for some time; but creature strength must fail, and with me it very soon does fail. Never was there a more ready and quick hand at giving up the fight than I! Last night, the dryness, the the formality, the hardness of my spirit seemed to increase upon me

as it had done before. I arose from my knees, thinking I never knew what communion with God was. In reality, every word seemed to stink of horrid hypocrisy. I was obliged to give it up. I hated myself, my house, the chair that I leaned upon, the sound of my feet as I walked; every thing about me and of myself I hated. I retired to bed in this wretched state, and lay awake (as it seemed to me) a good part of the night. However, I found at times my heart beat towards the sinner's Friend, and I do, from my heart, offer up thousands of thanks to him. He has once more helped me to cast myself upon him. Yes, brother; I grew so fast, my arms became so long and strong, that I took a firm hold on Father, Son, and Spirit, the blessed Three-One Jehovah, and was enabled to plead and pray for every poor buffeted, tempted, beaten-back soul in the wilderness, that the waters of salvation might gush forth, that the dry ground might become springs, and that thirsty souls might drink, and lift up their heads once again. Aye, I found the promise fitted the prayer, and the prayer the promise. Heartfelt groans and cries are sure to be heard and answered; though patience must have her perfect work, that we may be entire, lacking nothing that God has promised. We and our need fit the promise, and both fit Jesus; for we are in him and the promises are all in him, yea and more, our blessed Father is in them: "I in Thee and Thou in me!" O what words are these! What a fitness! "That they all may be one, as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee; that they, also, may be one is us."

Well, my brother, the poor wretch caught a glimpse of God as his Father, Jesus as his Redeemer, the Holy One as his Quickener, Leader, and Comforter. I wondered to feel such things again; I say again, for it is the same I have felt before. I am sure enough, and know by the taste; sweet and precious Jesus is the strength of our memory. I have felt it before; I have, my brother, I have. I, after the flesh and the devil, am a liar; but after the Spirit, as born of God, I am like him, and am of the truth. I am quite refreshed. I hate my unbelieving, mistrusting heart, but I love the Lord, because he is love, resting in love, never varying. No "shadow of turning" is in him; he is always the the same. Though we believe not, he abideth faithful. He cannot deny himself; no; he is still full of compassion. My soul this truth will tell; he heals all my maladies, and makes me say "I'm well." I don't know how to write about him, he is so great and good. Blessing, honour, praise, and power be unto the Lamb for ever! Hallelujah! Praise the Lord!

M—

S. E.

"WHERE SIN ABOUNDED, GRACE DID MUCH MORE ABOUND."

My dear Sir, and Brother beloved,—As I took up my pen to write to you, the thought came into my mind that you must be out of all patience with me for not answering your epistle of the 10th of May; and what must you think of me after professing such attachment? But I have to complain, as you do, of much backwardness to write to

what I had some years ago, as I now feel such stubbornness, rebellion, fretfulness, and pettishness, that I often seem to have nothing but complete devilishness within me. I am often caught at my old tricks, for the devil, lying in ambush, takes me unawares, which causes me to sigh, and to cry out, "O wretched man that I am; who shall deliver me from the body of this death?"

I wish to feel thankful for your condescending to write to such a worthless worm as I am, and I must tell you that I found your letter good and profitable. For instance, even in two words or so, "He must increase, but I must decrease," what a sight and sense I had as it were in a moment, of how the Lord had been teaching, schooling, and stripping me for these few years past; tearing away, in a measure, all my fancied goodness, and leaving me lame, naked, and bare, not having a creature feather left wherewith to fly. I trust I can now say with Paul, "If I must needs glory, I will glory of the things which concern my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me."

Yes, my dear Sir, I have nothing else to rest or to stay myself upon but the finished work of our dear Emmanuel, God with us, knowing, I hope I can say, my calling, and making my election sure, for my mind has been sweetly and blessedly carried back to before all time, thereby enabling me to see that He, the great I AM, had chosen me before the foundation of the world, and written my name in the Lamb's book of life. These were sweet moments; a time never, while tabernacling here, to be forgotten, though I often doubt it now through various things. Dark clouds often interpose so that I cannot see the Sun, and I am frequently constrained to cry out, "O thou Sun of Righteousness, arise with healing in thy wings." "Why criest thou for thine affliction; thy sorrow is incurable for the multitude of thine iniquity." (Jer. xxx. 15.) This was a time of Jacob's trouble to me. I believe that Jacob suffered more in going to Padanaram than most people, even Christians, are aware of, for, saith he, "How dreadful is this place!" Yes; and many a poor sinner can say the same, little dreaming that it is the very gate of heaven. Thus it was with me, for the very "pains of hell gat hold upon me," and I used to tell my brothers and friends that I was certain of going to hell, for I had the earnest of it already. I felt as if my inward parts were already set on fire, and that I was burning alive. This, however, I can say, and never will I give place to mortal man, "Never was sorrow like unto my sorrow." Also, since I have experienced delivering mercies I can say the same of joys, for glory unspeakable has shone into my soul while under the word, and I was compelled to cry out, "Enough! enough! O Lord, for I cannot live under it for five minutes."

I have rather digressed, but as you are a servant of the Lord I would merely give you this information, as it may, perhaps, in the course of your ministry, be made useful to some poor despairing souls when you tell them how long I was bound in chains, and carried away to Babylon, like Manasseh, or like the poor woman spoken of in the Scriptures, who could in no wise lift herself up, and of whom

Christ declared positively that Satan had bound her, and that too for eighteen years. I am confident that I was in the same situation as that woman for more than twenty-five years, not having the least shadow of hope during the whole of that time. My life, during those years, was spent, for the most part, in sighs and groans. Thousands upon thousands went out from my poor broken and torn-to-pieces heart. I was often obliged to put my hand upon my poor heart, for it seemed as if ready to break, and should it have done so, I felt I must have died instantly, and been thrust down into hell. O dreadful moments! You may tell those of your hearers who are brought into the same circumstances that they never need despair after such a poor sinful wretch as I am have found mercy. "If the vision tarry, wait for it; because it will surely come, it will not tarry."

But you may say, "Well friend, what hope, evidence, or testimony can you give me of God having loved you with an everlasting love?" Why, my dear Sir, although I cannot now enter into particulars, I will give you a brief outline.

In the year 1806, being at that time about twenty-three years of age, the dear Lord was pleased to call me, whilst following the plough, by his word and voice, saying, "Agree with thine adversary quickly." (Matt. v. 25.) The whole verse followed me all day long for several days, and to which I answered, "Stop, Lord, let me get married first; then will I be good and religious." Soon after this there came a thundering voice, saying, "Why do you not agree? why do you not repent?" My answer to which was, "Stay, Lord; do let me have a little pleasure first." Instantly the Holy Spirit withdrew, and Satan was let loose upon me. Ah! my dear Sir and brother, it is one thing to hear of the devil's temptations and fiery darts, and another thing to experience them. Satan began upon me with such filthiness of the flesh and awful obscenity as would be too bad to name. This greatly distressed me, but I did not know at that time from what quarter it came. By night I was terrified with dreams that I was going to die, and being then in the volunteers, I thought the French had landed, and had entered and posted themselves in various directions about my father's farm, waiting for an opportunity to shoot me, and me only. In some of my dreams I thought that wild bulls were running after me, and in others that I was in a nest of vipers and serpents. About this time I seemed to be followed by the devil, go where I would. Often did I go to hear the word of God with the devil after me. In this manner was I plagued day and night, but the worst is yet to come. Soon after this Satan changed his mode of attack, and hurled into my already distressed soul such awful and daring blasphemies against God as make me sigh when I think of them. I was afraid to open my mouth lest some of them should belch out. My days and my nights were now more dreadful than before, and I now got to such a state that I could not eat my victuals. My father, perceiving this, said to me one day while at dinner, "Why don't you eat your dinner?" "O, my dear father," said I to myself, "did you but know what I am suffering, and what I feel, you would not ask." After the devil had finished all such

temptations as these, he turned upon me with that portion of the word of God in Prov. i. 24—31. O how this cut up my poor soul! Satan told me it was now all over, and said, "You see you have refused. You are like Francis Spira. Mercy was offered to him, and he refused. You have also refused, and, to crown all, you have committed the unpardonable sin, and you know there is no mercy for that; to hell therefore you must go, for I have a place prepared for you." He then compared me to Cain, Esau, Balaam, and Judas, saying, "Only look at your body. You are as black as a devil, and a complete skeleton. You are a walking devil."

Under these things, judge in what misery I used to go about my father's farm. I sought the most secluded places, wringing my hands, pulling the hair off my head, beholding myself as the greatest sinner that ever lived on the face of the earth, and crying out, "Lost, lost, lost for ever!" I felt myself to be "wounded with the wound of an enemy." But there is a set time to favour Zion, for "I, who was before a blasphemer, and injurious," as Paul says, "obtained mercy, because I did it ignorantly in unbelief," and "the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ was exceeding abundant towards me." "It is," saith Paul, "a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief." "Nay, Paul," I have said a thousand times, "you are not, nor ever were such a sinner as I am." The following words I have often repeated to my friends: "Howbeit, for this cause I obtained mercy, that in me Jesus Christ might show forth all long-suffering for a pattern to them which should hereafter believe on him to life everlasting."

If spared, I mean and hope to send you an account of the Lord's wonderful dealings with me, but I would here say that there is such a thing as resisting the Holy Ghost, and I believe Paul did this when he persecuted the saints, hailing them to prison, &c. If he did not, why did the Lord Jesus say to him, "It is hard for thee to kick against the pricks?" I believe his conscience often smote him, though he gives us no account of it in any of his epistles. For my own part, I certainly did resist, and suffered severely for it, for the following portions of God's holy word entered my mind: "I have called, and ye refused;" "Ye have set at nought all my counsel, and would none of my reproof." O what cutting words were these to my distressed soul when I was in a corner of one of my father's fields, the wormwood and the gall of which my soul hath still in remembrance. "O," cried I, "what have I lost! O I have lost heaven by my obstinately refusing the call to repentance! Had I only repented yesterday, there might have been hope, but now it is all over!" Whilst I stood in the corner of the field I saw myself as being the greatest sinner and monster that ever lived, and as I looked upon the works of creation, a toad, which is the filthiest of all creatures, appeared before my eyes, but I considered myself ten thousand times more ugly and filthy than it.

I think I have tired your patience, and not without reason, by such a scrawl, but perhaps you will bear with me while I tell you as near as pos-

sible the time when black despair, as I believed, fell upon me. It was on the Thursday of Easter week, April, 1806, when I was praying for mercy before going to rest, that I arose suddenly from my knees, and crawled into bed with all the horrors of the damned upon me, looking every moment for the devil to come and fetch me away, soul and body. O how the hair of my head stood up! My misery was inexpressible, and therefore beyond the idea of any creature that has not been in a similar state. The language of Job was mine, for I cursed the day of my birth. About this time I sought to put an end to my life by hanging myself, and whilst in the act of doing it I heard a voice from heaven say some such words as these, "Why will you hang yourself? Do no such thing!" In my distress I travelled to Plymouth, in hopes that I might there find an opportunity to drown myself, but the unseen hand that withheld me from destroying myself on a former occasion was with me, so therefore I was again prevented from accomplishing my horrid design.

Thus I lived, and continued to live without hope until the last Thursday in November, 1831, when the words, "I have chosen thee, and not cast thee away," sounded into my inmost soul, in answer to which I said, "Is it possible that such a wretch as I am can be saved?" It re-echoed, "Yes; I have chosen thee, and not cast thee away." All this shortly died away, but it was not long until something else happened which caused me again to seek for mercy. On the Thursday night of which I have made mention above, I was led to enter an Independent chapel, it being what they called "lecture night," and the minister, a rank Arminian, which I did not then know, took his discourse from 1 Peter iii. 12: "The eyes of the Lord are over the righteous, and his ears are open unto their prayers." Now, I had been crying for mercy for a considerable time previous to the night on which I entered the chapel, and had told the Lord that if I perished I perished, but I would die praying. Nearly at the end of the minister's discourse the Lord came down upon me with such power that I could not refrain from shouting out aloud. The minister stopped, and the whole multitude of Ishmaelites gazed at me with wonder and astonishment. After this the devil fought hard with me many times. It was blow for blow. He often knocked me down, but, not being daunted, I still fought on, crying, "It may be true what you say, Satan, but here is a receipt, 'The blood of Jesus Christ, God's Son, cleanseth us from all sin.'" By this my enemy was put to flight for a time, and I told him that he was a liar, for I had not committed the unpardonable sin, and that it was nothing but his own lying and wicked injections. I now saw clearly what the sin against the Holy Ghost was what I had not been guilty of. There are two things that a child of God cannot do. He cannot commit the unpardonable sin, neither can he destroy himself.

Pardon this wandering jumble of a letter, for, by way of pleading an excuse, I may tell you that I was obliged to write it in the midst of business.

Yours in covenant and everlasting love in Jesus Christ,
Kingston-upon-Thames, Sept., 1842.

A. N.

EDITORS' REVIEW.

The Book of the Decrees in the hand of the Mediator: a Sermon preached at the Annual Meeting of the Suffolk and Norfolk New Association of Baptist Churches, held at Aldringham, June 15, 1842. By George Wright. Published by request.—Loynes, Bectles; Higham, and Palmer, London.

If soundness in the letter of truth, clearness of thought, fluency of expression, and simplicity yet strength of style were sufficient to constitute a good sermon, then the discourse at the head of our present article would be an excellent one. As it was "preached at the annual meeting of the Suffolk and Norfolk New Baptist Association," and is "published by request," we presume, of the churches, it comes before us under a semi-official form, and appears abroad stamped with the expressed approbation of the ministers and churches to whom it was addressed. We may be excused, therefore, if we pay more attention to it than if it were the isolated expression of the views and feelings of an individual.

The Sermon opens with some great general truths, simply and clearly expressed. The text, we may observe, is Rev. v. 5:

"Sorrow and suffering are so closely interwoven in the condition of all men, that it might naturally be supposed they would give their first attention, and apply their most earnest solicitude for the purpose of ascertaining whether there be any remedy for the miseries they endure. But it is not so. They seek an alleviation of pain; not the cure of the disease. Being alienated from the life of God, and separated, by sin, to an immeasurable distance from the supreme good and only source of happiness, we seek death in the error of our ways; and being insensible of the real cause of the evils we suffer, we have no desire for its removal. Our innate depravity is such, that the understanding is blinded; the affections are earthly, sensual, and devilish; the will is vitiated and averse from that which is spiritual and holy; and none saith, 'Where is God, my Maker, who giveth songs in the night?' 'There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God. Destruction and misery are in all their ways; and the way of peace they have not known.'

"'Salvation is of the Lord,' is the cardinal truth of revelation. The doctrine is confirmed by the fullest evidence, and is true in the unqualified sense of the words. 'O Israel thou hast destroyed thyself; but in me is thy help.' 'For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God.' Man, as fallen, can neither raise himself from the fall, nor contribute to his restoration; nor can his mind be changed or turned to God by any external means. He is dead in trespasses and sins, and is neither susceptible of spiritual feeling, nor capable of any spiritual act or effort till the Spirit of grace breathes life into him. In effecting his salvation, God who supplies the want which sin has created, makes him sensible of his want. The first act of his saving mercy discovers our guilt and danger; the next conducts us to the ark of safety. None but those who are quickened and enlightened by the Holy Spirit can find the way of peace. When convinced that they have sinned, and are condemned and accursed by the law which they have broken; when, in the light of God's immaculate purity and justice, their comeliness within them is turned into corruption; when their own righteousnesses appear to them vile and offensive as filthy rags; and when, after fruitless and agonising efforts to save themselves, they fall down before the divine majesty under the consciousness that they can neither keep the law nor believe the gospel; then, and not till then,

he draws them to Christ Jesus, and enables them to realise, by faith, the liberty and joy of redemption, and the earnest of eternal life. This is the work of God, and the method of his working: that which cannot be attained by the will of man, he performs by the exceeding greatness of his power. The remedy for the fall could be found only in the scheme of sovereign and mediatorial grace, formed in the council of the triune Jehovah, and founded in the person, offices, and work of the Son of God. Accordingly he is the only object of trust and hope to perishing sinners presented to our view in the gospel, and they who are called live by the faith of him. They have no salvation but in his name; no sanctity but what they derive from his fulness; no happiness but in fellowship with him. Their highest joy is to behold the glory of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth; and the Holy Spirit leads them continually to Him, as their life, righteousness, light and strength: destroying all confidence, but confidence in the incarnate God.

"What then should be the subject of the ministry, that the church may be blessed and the purpose of divine love and mercy fulfilled? What but the person, offices, grace, and work of Christ, as the only foundation of acceptance with God, and the immediate spring of all spiritual blessings to the vessels of mercy, who, by the vital principle of faith are united to him, and enjoy the privileges of the sons of God? The preaching of Christ is the means by which he becomes precious to them that believe, and the fruits of holiness are produced. 'Because of the savour of thy good ointments, thy name is as ointment poured forth, therefore do the virgins love thee.' 'All thy garments smell of myrrh, and aloes, and cassia, out of the ivory palaces, whereby they have made thee glad.'"

There is no want of fluency here; all runs as smooth and as easy, as calm and as uninterrupted as might please the nicest ear. And who shall say that great truths are not here proclaimed? The utter fall and innate depravity of man, the sovereignty of Jehovah, the ancient covenant settlements, the work of the Spirit upon the heart, making known the malady and revealing the remedy, are all clearly set forth.

But as one sample is scarcely sufficient to show the nature of the whole, we will add another extract which may serve to give a fuller and clearer idea of the sermon:

"In the everlasting covenant, this union was the ground upon which our sins, demerit, and punishment were transferred to him as our Head and Surety; and is the ground upon which his righteousness is transferred, by proper and efficient imputation, to all who believe, that they may be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the deeds of the law. Precious mystery of grace! Our sin was made his, and his righteousness is made ours; so that we, who are altogether as an unclean thing, are righteous even as he is righteous. 'Surely, shall one say, in the Lord have I righteousness and strength: even to him shall men come; and all that are incensed against him shall be ashamed. In the Lord shall all the seed of Israel be justified, and shall glory.'" (Isaiah xlv. 24, 25.)

"Between those who are thus one there can be no separate interest, nor even separate existence. 'My beloved is mine, and I am his' is the appropriating assurance of living faith. If we are enlightened by the Spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Christ, so as to see what he is to us and what we are in him, we shall enjoy the evidence of our title to his unsearchable riches, and realize, in the joyful freedom of the heart, the mystery and blessedness of the apostle's confession, 'FOR ME TO LIVE IS CHRIST.' There is a sufficiency in him for every want we feel; and the gospel, as the law of faith, binds us to heartfelt dependence on Jesus, and assures us that we are saved in him with an everlasting salvation. A truth so rich with mercy removes all doubt and dejection from the mind, fills us with peace and joy in believing, kindles devout

gratitude to the fountain of love and goodness, sanctifies the affections, and brings every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ. The law of faith is the law of liberty, and he that looketh into it and continues therein, he being not a forgetful hearer but a doer of the work, shall be blessed in his deed. Believing in Jesus is the sum total of experimental and practical religion and piety; and the faith by which we live springs from him as the root of David, and cannot fail. Never forget, believers, that we are complete in him 'who is made of God unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption,' and that from him our fruit is found. They must be safe and blessed who are one with him who was dead and is alive, and lives for evermore, and hath the keys of hell and of death. The plants growing from this immortal root are as the root itself, planted by the river of the water of life; they live because he lives, and will bring forth fruit unto perfection when he shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all those who believe. 'Christ is all and in all.'"

As the gentle current flowed thus purely from the lips of the preacher, well might "the ministers and messengers of the churches assembled" (p. 5) at Aldringham sit drinking in the pleasing sounds. No harsh note grated on their ears; and when the preacher, towards the end of his discourse, bade them "weep not," whatever afflictive circumstances might arise, we doubt not that they obeyed his directions to the very letter, and that their countenances for the remainder of the day were more arrayed in smiles than bathed with tears.

And now it may be asked, "If the sermon be all you have represented it to be, what fault can be found with it?" Our answer is, that we do not find fault with what *is* in the sermon, but with what *is not* in it. Consider the occasion on which it was preached—a meeting together of ministers. What a favourable opportunity for speaking home truths in a searching, experimental manner! What a season for unripping the deceits and delusions of those who, from being preachers themselves, cannot often be faithfully dealt with from the pulpit! What an occasion for "reproving, rebuking, exhorting with all long suffering and doctrine." (2 Tim. iv. 2,) and of "commending himself to every man's conscience in the sight of God!" But instead of this faithful dealing with their consciences, we can find in this sermon nothing but statements of doctrine in which, as an association, all were agreed, explanations of scripture which none could deny, and a general outline of experience so vague, that, whilst it would meet the case of none of the living, it would offend none of the dead. In this mirror, thus held up, all the ministers present would see their own sentiments duly reflected; but would they see in it any features of hypocrisy to make them mourn, or any traces of the Spirit's work in their heart to make them rejoice? What then, we may ask, would be the effect of this smooth, well-written and, no doubt, well-preached discourse upon their minds? Would it produce self-examination and heart-searching? Would it lead them to sigh and cry because of the abominations of their hearts? Would it send them home filled with shame and confusion of face at their backslidings, pride, covetousness, and continual shortcomings? Would it whet their sword to divide more keenly between the soul and spirit, the joints and marrow? Would they preach on the following Lord's day with more solemnity and power, more unction

and savour, more godly fear and trembling awe; and would their people read in their ministrations an evidence that they had felt the Lord's hand more deeply and powerfully in their consciences? We greatly fear not. Either from its want of power the sermon would have no effect upon them at all, or self-satisfaction and ease in Zion would be the effect of such an opiate.

And here we see the delusive effect of all preaching that does not flow from an exercised and feeling heart. The very truth itself, when not preached under the solemn-unction and power of the Spirit, hardens instead of softens, and deludes instead of saves. The thick veil of self-deceit and hypocrisy is not to be rent asunder by such gentle hands as traced the sermon now under review. A more searching, cutting, stripping ministry is now required. A mere unexceptionable statement of doctrinal truth is not suited to the present state of the churches. Something more is wanted than a quiet sail in a pleasure boat on a summer evening upon the sea of truth. The insidious current is harrying the vessel on towards the rapids, and nervous arms are needed to pull against the stream. How many young people are entrapped, we can call it by no other term, into a Calvinistic profession, without any work of grace upon their hearts, by smooth statements of doctrinal truth! And when thus launched, how awfully are they carried on in presumption, made members of churches, and borne up by the good opinion of others, until some dreadful fall, or a death-bed makes known to them the fatal secret, that they had lamps and wicks, but no oil. What lightness, too, is often propagated from the pulpit to the pew by the unhallowed levity of many Calvinistic preachers; and what a sad tendency has all this rash meddling with holy things to harden the consciences of their hearers, until sin loses all its hideousness, and they are landed in open or secret Antinomianism! A hard, dry statement of truth differs almost as much from God's mode of revealing truth in the Scriptures as it does from error itself. Truth, as God has revealed it, is clothed with experience, and mingled with precepts, warnings, and promises, so as to render it an appeal to the heart and conscience. There are in the Bible no dry, theoretical statements, no elaborate systems drawn out with mathematical precision, no amusing anecdotes, no jibes and jests, no ridicule poured on doubts and fears, no encouragement given to self-deceivers; in a word, nothing in the least resembling what is heard in many Calvinistic chapels. Let a poor child of God quietly read, under the blessed Spirit's sacred unction, a chapter of John's Gospel or of Paul's Epistles, and compare the sweet emotions, the soft yet comforting sensations, the goings forth of his soul upwards to the Lord in faith, hope, and love, or, it may be, the piercing convictions that wound his conscience as to his own baseness and vileness—let him, we say, compare the feelings of sorrow or joy created in his soul by the word of God with the effect produced on his spirit by the noisy rant, foolish anecdotes, trifling manner, light jests, and occasional attempted flights of eloquence to be witnessed in many places, and under many ministers, who boast

as though they had a monopoly of truth, letters patent from the court of heaven exclusively to preach the Gospel. Will he not come away either wounded in spirit at the unhallowed lightness with which divine things have been handled? or if he has been at all caught by the wildfire so liberally scattered, will not his conscience be afterwards grieved at his sin and folly? Will he find humility, filial fear, godly sorrow, tenderness of conscience, communion with Jesus, deadness to the world deepened in his soul? or will his evidences be brightened, his faith strengthened, his hope enlarged, or his love to God and his saints sensibly increased?

Children of God, try the ministry under which you sit by these tests. It is not of God if it produce not good effects. It may be the gospel in the letter, but it is not the gospel in the spirit if it does not produce the spirit of the gospel. The tree is to be known by the effects; and if the fruit be bad, depend upon it the tree is bad also.

As we know nothing more of Mr. Wright than by the sermon at the head of the present article, we think it due to him to state that the latter part of these remarks are not aimed at him. Though his sermon seems to us lacking in that weight and power, that strict line of separation, and that experimental vein of searching truth which we desire to see, we feel bound to say that we perceive in it no lightness, no jesting which is not convenient, no old wives' tales, no cutting at the exercises of tried and tempted souls. It is of too tame and neutral a character to do much good or harm. "Away with such a fellow from the earth," was not likely to burst from the lips of his hearers; nor, on the other hand, would many hard hearts be likely to be broken, or broken hearts bound up.

It would appear from the title page, as well as from some remarks toward the close of the sermon, that the Association, before which it was preached, was a "new" one, and had separated from the old Association, which had fallen into Fullerism and Arminianism. Such a separation looks well; but did it ever occur to the members of "the New Association" that something more is required than a sound creed; that life, power, and divine teaching are the main requisites, and that where these are not, the heights of Calvinism are as much refuges of lies as the mudholes of Arminianism?

Had these solemn considerations pressed deeply on Mr. Wright's mind, had this burden from the Lord lain heavily upon his spirit, we should have had something very different preached at Aldringham; but then we might not have been favoured with the perusal of it, as it might not then have been "published by request." We may look upon this sermon, then, as a fair sample of the preaching approved of by the New Association; and we must say that, if it be so, it is, in our opinion, extremely defective, unsuitable to the present exigencies of the church of Christ, and, as it bears few marks of the dictation, so it seems little likely to receive the blessing, of the Holy Ghost.

INQUIRY.

Messrs. Editors,—A lover of the glorious truths which the *Gospel Standard* sets forth would feel obliged if you, or some of your correspondents, would give their thoughts on Hebrews vi. 4, 5, and 6.

Yours truly,

Farnham, July 20, 1842.

AN INQUIRER.

POETRY.

LINES BY JOHN CENNICK.

Now, Lord, in peace with thee and all below,
 Let me depart, and to thy kingdom go,
 As earnestly, fatigued in journeys, I
 Have wish'd to see my town to lodge in nigh;
 So earnestly my weeping eyes I turn
 Towards thy house, and languish, pine, and mourn.
 Nor can I help it, for within I feel
 A thirst to see thee quite insatiable.
 'Tis true thy blessings make my cup run o'er;
 I feel thy favours daily more and more;
 When troubles me afflict and bow me down,
 I never am forsaken or alone.
 Thou kissest all my tears and grieves away,
 Art with me all night long, and all the day;
 I have no doubt that I belong to thee,
 And shall be with thee to eternity.
 This firm my heart believes, as thou art true;
 I am thy pleasant child, thy son, I know;
 But take it not amiss, O be not grieved,
 I want from pilgrimage to be relieved.
 I want to be dissolved, and no more here
 A wanderer be a banish'd foreigner;
 Sign my dismissal with a tender love
 That my reiding thou dost quite approve.
 I would not thee offend, thou know'st my heart,
 Nor one short day before thy time depart;
 But I am weary and dejected; O
 Let me to the eternal Sabbath go!
 In no chastisement, darkness, or distress;
 In no confusion, but in inward peace,
 With thy full leave and approbation, I
 Entreat to lay my staff and sandals by.
 No sudden stroke or violent fever give,
 Which may me of my senses quite bereave,
 Lest I should with my lips offend or err,
 Or grieve such tender brethren who are near.
 No; let my fleeting soul, and my last word
 Speak my assurance, and exalt my Lord;
 Allow me this, and sign my glad release;
 Let my soul hear thee say, "Depart in peace."
 I long to see thee, Son of Man, and be
 A pardon'd part of thy dear family;
 As oft at sea, when wind and tide were fair,
 I've seen the less'ning mountains disappear,
 Exceeding sick, yet glad to move so fast,
 In hopes the other side to reach at last;
 Till the glad sailors spy the look'd for shore,
 And the land breezes my lost strength restore.

Then on the deck how pleased have I seen
 My port, and thought as if on shore I'd been;
 I see my friends; I kiss them, and partake
 Their welcomes with their arms around my neck.
 When all is realised, and on the strand,
 Cheerful and thankful, lo! they see me land;
 Then I my sickness and fatigues forget,
 And all I fancied 's real and complete.
 Just so I long my passport to receive,
 And have permission this sad world to leave;
 Like some poor wind-bound passenger I wait;
 He thirsts for home; nor food, nor sleep is sweet.
 So I with love-sick anguish, tears, and sighs,
 Oft (my heart melting) look toward the skies;
 No words can express the throbbings of my breast
 To fly away, and ever be at rest.
 If I am near when one in faith expires,
 Or hear their happy exit, it inspires
 My eager soul their footsteps to pursue,
 And fain that night I'd make my exit too.
 I scarce reflect they now are with the Lamb,
 But down my cheeks the salty riv'lets stream;
 I long to kiss that hand that once me blest,
 Those feet that travell'd to procure my rest.
 The lips that me confess'd, and that dear head
 That bow'd when on it all my sins were laid;
 O, Lamb, I languish till that day I see,
 When thou wilt say, "Come up, and be with me!"
 Now twice seven years have I thy servant been;
 Now let me end my service and my sin;
 Forgive all my faults, and mistakes, and shame,
 And pardon all things where I've been to blame.
 Let the same kiss my absolution seal,
 And pow'r convey all that is bruised to heal;
 Then loose the silver cord with gentle pain,
 Whilst I on thy dear bosom smiling lean.
 Let the death sweat, and the sick fainty chills,
 (With cheering views of the eternal hills,)
 And limbs grown cold, and breaking eye-strings tell
 But a few moments, and all will be well.
 Thine everlasting arms be underneath;
 Thy bleeding wounds disarm the tyrant—Death;
 Thy own cold sweat my clammy sweat wipe off,
 Thy cross my bed and pillow then make soft.
 Thy ministers of flaming fire attend,
 And sing me sweetly to my journey's end;
 Then let me hear, then bid my friends adieu,
 And say, to thine honour, "Thou'rt kind and true."
 "I've overcome; I live for evermore;
 My sorrows now, and pains, and tears, are o'er;
 The angels wait—the Saviour calls. Farewell!
 I go with him in endless peace to dwell."
 Then let my breath grow short, my strength decay;
 The rattles low, and pulses die away;
 So fall asleep, and, soaring, stoop and view
 The less'ning world now left, and all below.
 Meanwhile shall I awake in Jesus' arms,
 Above the reach of slanders, wrongs, or harms;
 And with my dear acquaintance gone before,
 Stay with the Lamb, and go from him no more.

THE
GOSPEL STANDARD,
OR,
FEEBLE CHRISTIAN'S SUPPORT.

"Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness; for they shall be filled."—Matt. v. 6.

"Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began."—2 Tim. i. 9.

"The election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded."—Rom. xi. 7.

"If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest.—And they went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch; and he baptized him.—In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost."—Acts viii. 37, 38; Matt. xxviii. 19.

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A DIALOGUE BETWEEN JAMES AND SAMUEL.

(Continued from page 42.)

J. Why, bless your soul, when matters were with me as I have just stated, in holy wonder I said again and again, "Lord, how is it that thou shouldst manifest thyself in such a glorious and blessed way to such a sinful wretch as I?" but, as if determined to overcome me with bliss and blessedness, he crowned the whole in my conscience by bringing the following text with divine power, and sealing it there: "Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love, therefore with loving-kindness have I drawn thee." (Jer. xxxi. 3.) Pardon, peace, and love so filled my soul, that I could feelingly say with the Psalmist, "Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me, bless his holy name. Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits; who forgiveth all thine iniquities; who healeth all thy diseases; who redeemeth thy life from destruction; who crowneth thee with loving-kindness and tender mercies; who satisfieth thy soul with good things; so that thy youth is renewed like the eagle's." (Ps. ciii. 1—5.) And the glorious doctrine of everlasting, electing love was opened to my mind with such sweetness and glory, that I saw and felt it to be a most blessed, God-glorifying, sinner-humbling truth, and with all my heart I blessed and praised the Lord for everlasting, unconditional, electing love. This love just suited my case and fitted my conscience, and for some time rested upon my mind with a sweet, heavenly dew. I felt myself in the very heart of the Lord Jesus Christ, and, bless his precious name, I felt him in my heart; and in very deed I knew what it was to come and sing in the heights of Zion, and to feast there on the blessed fat things

full of marrow, and wine on the lees well refined; the old legal veil was taken from my eyes, and I saw a glorious measure of the beauty of the Lord and the glory of our God; the world lost all its charms, sin and Satan disappeared, death appeared to be swallowed up in victory, and all tears, except tears of joy, were wiped from my eyes, nor could I feel one corroding rebuke in my conscience. (Isa. xxv. 6—9.) The solemn intercourse. I then enjoyed with the Lord of life and glory I cannot forget; nor did I at that time expect that my feelings would ever depart from this glorious mountain, or from such a banquet; but alas, alas! since that blessed time I have been in such dark places, such confused labyrinths, and such suffocating filth and mire, that, if the matchless grace of God had not been sovereign, discriminating, immutable, rich, and free, I must have sunk to rise no more.

S. Really, James, while you have been making your various statements, my heart has burned within me, in tracing the dealings of the Lord both with you and myself, for there is a great similarity in our experience. There is one thing in which we appear to vary a little, namely, when I was in my carnal state, I, even from a youth, believed in the doctrine of election, (if I may call it believing,) and I then thought within myself that to deny the doctrine of election was to deny the being of God; for if the Lord knew, to a certainty, who would be saved and who would be lost, *that* was election, and if he did not, then he was only like one of us; and though I had never been taught any creed, I was quite satisfied that election must be a truth. Nevertheless, when the Lord was graciously pleased to quicken my dead soul, and set my sins before me in the light of his countenance, causing me to see and feel them in their real and awful nature, as sins against a holy, just, and good God, the doctrine of election made my soul tremble; for I believed it to be God's truth, and a truth directly against me. I really feared that I was to a certainty a reprobate, and that I must perish in my sins; and though not eighteen years of age at the time, I felt fully convinced that I deserved the wrath of God to the uttermost. But in the end the blessed Spirit was graciously pleased to reveal the Lord Jesus Christ to my soul as my blessed and complete Saviour, and, like you, I both could and did sing for joy, and adored the Lord with my whole heart. His name and nature, and love and loveliness were all blessed to me, and I praised and blessed him with all my heart, and mind, and strength. What you have said concerning your own feelings suits my case well in most respects; but go on with your discourse.

J. Another reason why I wish to speak with you upon this subject is, because I have of late met with some professors of religion who say that if the doctrine of election is true, God is worse than Satan himself, and they have come out with such awfully blasphemous expressions against God and his truth, that they have made my soul tremble; and yet they wish to make it appear that they have had great and sweet experience, and that they love the Lord Jesus Christ. Now, friend Samuel, what do you think about such professors of religion?

S. If they can pour out blasphemous expressions against God and his electing love, I would not give a straw for their religion, nor for what they call their deep and sweet experience, nor for their love to Christ either: "By their fruits ye shall know them." Yet I think there are some of God's people who are not at the first led into a feeling enjoyment of this glorious truth, and who are for some time staggered about it; but they dare not speak blasphemous words against it, and the God of it. You will find such to have a tender conscience, and they will speak rather cautiously, and if you are able to go the right way to work in tracing the dealings of the Lord with their souls, you will be sometimes a means of bringing them to acknowledge the truth of it. I will, in as brief a way as I can, relate a circumstance of this nature. I once asked a person of this description if he had felt himself to be a lost sinner. His reply was, "Yes, indeed I have." "Well," said I, "as soon as you began to feel that you were a sinner, you did all in your power to deepen your convictions, did you not?" His reply was, "No, that I did not; for I did all I could to get rid of them, where I would, or do what I would, the Lord followed me up, and made me feel more and more of my sinful nature, and the dreadful nature of my crimes, till I was completely miserable, and believed that I must be damned." I then said, "Well, by and by you heard that the Lord Jesus Christ came to save sinners, and the moment you heard that, you believed and were happy, did you not?" "Believed!" he said, "I could not have believed if you had given me a word." "Not believe, man," said I, "you surely could believe." "I really could not," was the reply. "Well, did you believe at last?" "Yes," said he, "the dear Lord was graciously pleased to bless me with faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, and my guilt fled from my conscience, and I really did rejoice in Christ." "Then," said I, "if you get to heaven at last, it must now be owing to your own faithfulness to God." He said, "If so, I must perish." "Well," I said, "what does it depend upon?" Said he, "The blessed Lord continuing his loving-kindness and tender mercies to me." I then said, "Do you think there are any sinners in hell?" To this he replied, "Yes, too many." "But," said I, "are there any there for whom the Lord has done what you say he has done for you, and must do for you, if you get to heaven?" His reply was, "They had a chance of being saved." I said, "Tell me nothing about chance; you tell me that you could not get rid of your convictions, for the Lord followed you up, go where or do what you would. Now if the Lord had acted the same towards the damned in hell, could they have got rid of their convictions?" His reply was, "I think they could not." I said, "Well, then, you say you could not believe till the Lord gave you faith; and if the Lord had given them faith, as you say he gave it you, must not they also have believed?" His reply was, "I think they must." "Well, you say if you get to heaven at last, it must be owing to the Lord continuing his loving-kindness and tender mercies to you. Now if the Lord had convinced them, as you say he convinced you, and given them faith, as you say he gave it you, and

continued his loving-kindness and tender mercies towards them, as you say he must do towards you if you get to heaven, would not they have been in heaven?" He answered, "I think they would." I then said, "Is not that election?" His reply was, "I think it does look like it." Perhaps you are weary with this tale; but if you can only trace the experience of any real child of God, he will be obliged to acknowledge the truth. Still, after all the awful blasphemy of free-willers, there are others who profess religion whose doctrines are as dangerous, and as far from God as theirs.

J. Pray, who or what are they?

S. Such men as can talk about and even preach very boldly the doctrine of election, with some other doctrines connected with it, and yet can daringly say that the elect have no cause to mourn, and groan, and sigh over and under a feeling sense of sin, for that sin can do them no harm. I have heard that there are men who profess to be all joy and peace, and who, if you talk to them about the plague of the heart, or even of having a feeling sense of the power and sweetness of election and other branches of God's truth, will laugh you to scorn, and say, "O, feelings! I have nothing to do with feelings; I live above feelings; my life is a life of faith."

J. I do indeed believe with you that such men are as far from God, and as awfully deceived, and as dangerous as the other class. But would they not speak more properly if they were to say that their life was a life of presumption rather than a life of faith?

S. Indeed they would; for they appear to be of that number of whom it is said, "Because they have no changes, therefore they fear not God." (Ps. lv. 19.) Vital faith is not a dead, inactive principle, but a living one; and it is by a living faith that the child of God eats the flesh and drinks the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ; (John vi. 53, 56;) and can any living man eat and drink without feeling? Can a man truly bathe in the fountain of Christ's love and blood without feeling? Can a child of God experience the Lord working in him mightily. (Col. i. 29.) without feeling? Can a man thirst for God, the living God, and pour out his soul unto God, without feeling? (Ps. xlii. 1.) Can a man's mouth be satisfied with good things, and his youth be renewed like the eagle's, without feeling? (Ps. ciii. 5.) Or can a spiritual man spiritually handle the word of life without feeling? (1 John i.) Can there be real spiritual fellowship with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ, without feeling? (Eph. i. 3.) Can a man be humbled, as a little child, without feeling? (Matt. xviii. 4.) Can there be true peace with God, and joy in the Holy Ghost, and a rejoicing in hope of the glory of God, without feeling? Can a child of God in very deed cast all his cares upon the Lord, without feeling? Can any one be of the true circumcision, worship God in the spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh, without feeling? Can any one become dead to the law by the body of Christ, and be spiritually married to Christ, and bring forth fruit unto God, without feeling? (Rom. vii. 4.) Can a child of God be with Christ in his garden, or enjoy his heirship, and eat and drink abundantly of the

blessings of his love and grace, without feeling? To me it appears that an unfeeling religion is at best the shell without the kernel, or a body without a soul.

J. It appears to me to be nothing better than a fine, dressed up doll, or, as Hart expresses it,

"A child of fancy finely dress'd,
But not the living child."

I do not think it possible for a child of God to have either spiritual joys or heart-rending sorrows, without feeling. Paul felt his thorn in the flesh, and the buffetings of the devil too, which made him cry vehemently to the Lord for deliverance; and he also felt a sweet measure of God's grace being sufficient for him, and of the Lord's strength being made perfect in his weakness, and of the blessedness of the power of Christ resting upon him. (2 Cor. xii. 7—10.) But living faith is one thing, and presumption is quite another thing. I have heard of a preacher declaring that he did not care if he never enjoyed the presence of the Lord again while here, for he was sure that he should go to heaven when he died; but such men are no companions for me.

S. Pray what can such a man want to go to heaven for, since the Lord says that "in his presence is fulness of joy?" The psalmist differed very much from such a man; hence he prays, "Lord, lift thou up the light of thy countenance upon us." (Ps. iv. 6.) In another place he says, "Thou didst hide thy face, and I was troubled." (Ps. xxx. 7.) So that with all the psalmist's infirmities, he had not arrived at that pitch of presumption as not to care about the blessed enjoyment of the presence of the Lord. But David's religion was a feeling religion, and therefore he says, "Thou hast turned for me my mourning into dancing; thou hast put off my sackcloth, and girded me with gladness." (Ps. xxx. 11.) And I believe that David felt both his mourning, and dancing, and rejoicing, and so did Job. (See Job xxxiv. 29.) O my friend, what a mercy it is to be kept with a tender conscience, and free from presumption, and to have a real concern for a feeling enjoyment of God and truth! But men who can ridicule a feeling religion are quite welcome to all the peace and joy they can boast of. Paul felt the law in his members warring against the law of his mind, which at times brought him into captivity to the law of sin, and caused him great wretchedness. (Rom. vii. 23, 24.) He felt the lustrings of the flesh against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh, and his incapacity to do the things that he would, (Gal. v. 17,) and he knew well what it was to experience the power from whence a complete victory over all his foes must come.

(To be concluded in our next.)

THE UNCHANGEABLENESS AND PERFECTIONS OF GOD.

The unchangeableness or immutability of God is a strange stab at the littleness, the contemptibleness, and naughtiness of free will, Fullerism, and all universal redemptionists. And I ask, what is

this unchangeableness or immutability? It is the immutability of God. And who is God? The Being whose perfections are himself, and himself his perfections. Thus the perfections of God are searched into by any one in whom, through regeneration, dwells the Spirit of illumination.

When I think of those perfections of God, as, for instance, immutability, I stand back, and tremble, and keep my distance, in reverence and godly fear at a Being possessed of such a tremendous quality as this of unchangeableness. "What!" say I, "can it be, that I,—a worm, a creature of a day, a moth, and a shadow,—can ever worship such an amazing Being as one who, infinitely more stable than the mountains, cannot ever be rooted up or altered in the least of his purposes? Can it be that I can worship him?" Thus godly fear and every grace, with reverence and with admiration, take possession of his breast in whom is displayed, by the Spirit's power, this or any other admirable quality in God.

When I consider, also, that to this quality of unchangeableness in God, are added the tremendous perfections of eternity, infinity, self-existence, that he cannot be destroyed, that he never began and never ends, how, at times, the feelings of a sensible sinner tremble and quake!

When I consider, also, that to this unchangeableness are also added the strictest justice, the most rigid justice, the most unalterable justice, the eternal and infinite determination to "bring the wheel over the wicked," and "not to clear the guilty," no, not in the least degree; when I consider a Being armed with such formidable qualities, (formidable to such a guilty wretch as man,) I stand amazed before him! And, feeling my carnal mind enmity against him, I wonder not that the unregenerate priests, and rabble, and religious folks among the Jews, called out and roared out for Barabbas, a miscreant, rather than the God-Man. The beautiful attribute of hatred to sin, and power and determination to punish it, vexed the carnal professors of letter-godliness to distraction, the unchangeableness of God heightening it all, and the even-handed stroke of Infinite Justice blazing before their crooked goings-on. I say, need any one wonder that human nature roared out for Barabbas rather than Christ, if, in the self-existent light of God in a natural conscience, they saw the *unchangeable* hatred of God against pride, the show of a mere outward tinsel religion, and his unconquerable power to punish it; when they saw the *unchangeable* liking to humility which Christ showed; when they saw his unchangeable batterings against the love of the world, against ambition, against laying up money, the modes of life, the wisdom of man, and all the painted drapery of human proceedings?

I declare, for my part, that I have "stood and trembled" when I have thought of even this one attribute, the unchangeableness of this Almighty Being. What! will he not alter? And has he power to execute his purposes too? O the stun that it gives to the little, the great, the serpentine and twisted self-importance of such a

wretch as myself! And I find that the patriarch Job shared with me in this; for he felt himself to be a wretch, or else he would never have indulged in that supernatural apostrophe, "I *abhor* myself." I say that the patriarch Job shared in this, to be brought to a mighty deep, when, in God's regenerating light, he was led to contemplate God's immutability. "For he *performeth* the thing that is *appointed* for me; therefore am I troubled at his presence. When I consider, I am *afraid* of him." (Job xxiii. 14, 15.)

When I consider, again, the Lord Jesus Christ, in whose obedience and blood-shedding I stand acquitted and gloriously righteous before God; in which Lord Jesus Christ all the perfections of the Deity centre, harmonize, and shine in behalf of the redeemed; when I think of him, and think of myself, how my heart sinks within me! he steadfast to his purpose, and I timid as a fly. When I think of the difference between him and my fellow-creatures,—he God as well as man, and taking on himself the form of a servant, and being a pennyless carpenter; (for poor women had to minister to his wants;) when I think of him a *servant*, though he was Lord of all, and contrast this with the blazing haughtiness of man; he a servant, and man galloping with the swiftness of a racer after respectability; he having no where to lay his head, and man cheated with the whim of a fine house; he called "a fellow" by the religious, and swarms of self-made Christians glorying in an honourable name; he crucified, and they stretched on their beds of ease; he almost pennyless, and they with their handsome incomes; he laid in wait for from the cradle by Herod, the slaughterer of innocents; hunted much through life by nominal professors, and stung by the cruel death of the cross; when I think of all his troubles internally, which none scarce but God know anything of; I say, when I thus consider Christ, in whom harmonized and concentrated, in behalf of the redeemed, all the *perfections* of Deity, and contrast him with *man* or self, how my soul bubbles up with unutterable feelings, and sees the world to be a wilderness, and myself carnally and naturally a fiend! O God! how unsearchable are thy thoughts! how high thy glories swell!

And I would observe that the unchangeableness of God stops in me the mouth of free-will prayer; it shows me that God has a will; it makes me wait for *indited* prayer; it makes me look to the Spirit to teach me to pray; it makes me see that all prayer not according to the will of God is wild-fire; it makes me feel that I know not what to pray for; and it makes my ransomed soul (in which the Spirit of supplication dwells) look to the Holy Spirit alone, to teach me how to pray.

O blessed and soul-enriching contemplations! My soul as a weaned child waits upon God. I sun myself in the blaze of his unalterable and countless perfections. It makes me feel *him* to be the habitation also of all amiableness, as well as of all power; for what is more amiable than perfect goodness, and what more beautiful than beauty itself? Gladness, goodness, and beauty are in God's tabernacle. (Joel i. 16; Ps. xcvi. 6.) I trust that the fur-

nance of affliction will be sanctified to cleanse my misty eyesight to see more of these things. I trust that I may be brought to say, "My soul fainteth for the living God," the self-existent habitation of all his many excellencies. May I be able even to say, with one of old, "I opened my mouth and panted" for the very fervent desire that I have towards God's ways "at all times."

Abingdon.

I. K.

FRUITS OF THE FURNACE.

Dear Brother,—Your last came duly to hand, and its contents gave me much pain. You are now, I perceive, in the furnace of affliction. Perhaps the heaviest temporal affliction is that of the body, and of which you complain. I am, as you well know, no stranger to this trying dispensation, and am, therefore, the better able to sympathise with you. This is a path in which it has been my lot to travel for some years past, and a thorny path I have found it to be; and though I would not swell my sorrows, yet the Lord only knows what I have undergone. But, though a rough way, I have sometimes seen it to be a right way, that leads to a city of habitation.

You complain, too, of sore soul trouble on account of the circumstances in which God has seen fit to place you; of a rebellious spirit; and of murmurings and fretfulness against the dealings of the Lord, and you contrast your own impatience in trouble with the patient endurance of Christ Jesus under the most extreme suffering, that God the Father might be glorified. O what poor, what base returns we make for so much love bestowed upon us, for so much mercy manifested to us! It is, however, a mercy to see that "afflictions do not spring out of the dust;" that God doth not willingly afflict or grieve the children of men, and that there is a "needs be" for them. O how sweet it is to be enabled to see by faith that the sorrows, griefs, and perplexities which may attend us in our pilgrimage

"To Canaan's fair and happy land,"

are among those things that "work together for good to them that love God, to them that are the called according to his purpose." (Rom. viii. 28.) I sometimes enter a little into the blessedness of the consideration that "our light afflictions, which are but for a moment, work out for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory," (2 Cor. iv. 17,) "if so be that we suffer with him, (Jesus,) that we may be also glorified together." (Rom. viii. 17.) When the Spirit of the living God is pleased to pour a little prayer into my soul, I beg of the dear Lord not only for a sweet acquiescence in all his dealings with me, but also, being ashamed of my rebellion and unbelief, that I may be enabled to approve of the same. Sometimes, when borne down with sorrow and weariness of body, I am ready to exclaim, "What should I do if I had no Jesus for my support, no God to whom I could tell my sorrows, no throne of grace to supplicate, and no soul-cheering prospect of endless rest

in that blissful place where Jesus dwells? that dear place above the starry skies, into which unnumbered millions of happy blood-washed spirits have entered who were once poor sinners like myself; who, when in the body, were afflicted, tempest-tossed, and travelled in a path of tribulation, as followers of the once poor, lowly, suffering, but now exalted, princely, and immortally-glorious Jesus. They have received a hearty welcome home! They now occupy the mansion prepared for them! They have experienced a blessed transition into a solemn eternity, and are swallowed up in that profound abyss of love which no eye can fathom! O the amazing blessedness of having a sweet welcome home to the bosom of Jesus Christ, and a dear embrace in the everlasting arms of a faithful, covenant-keeping, and eternal God! They now sing in holy, lofty, solemn, and adoring strains of the omnipotent deeds of Christ, their Captain; of the matchless majesty of Almighty grace; and of the eternal efficacy of the blood of sprinkling! They worship their God, 'saying, Amen! blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honour, and power, be unto our God for ever and ever! Amen.' (Rev. vii. 12.) They have an everlasting, beatific sight of the blazing glory of God the Father; they gaze with unspeakable rapture on the regal grandeur of Christ the Son; while the ever-blessed Spirit, God the Holy Ghost, is loved and adored as one with the Father and the Son, coequal and co-eternal! 'These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb!' (Rev. vii. 14.)

But to return. The Captain of our salvation was made perfect through sufferings, and waded through sorrows and blood to the throne which he now fills in glory. So, also, there is a measure of suffering for the church, which is his body, to "fill up," or experience. It would appear exceedingly strange for the head to be crowned with thorns, and the feet to stand upon roses. To be vitally united to Christ, to become part of his bones, of his flesh, and of his blood, is to be unspeakably blessed. But this union cannot subsist without "fellowship of his sufferings," in a greater or less degree; hence, therefore, we suffer with him and rejoice with him, and it is sweet to be coming "up from the wilderness leaning upon the Beloved." (Song viii. 5.) Dear Hart sings very sweetly in the following lines:

"A faithful friend of grief partakes;
But union can be none
Between a heart of melting wax,
And hearts as hard as stone."

Whatever sufferings Jesus endured in the world, in the garden of Gethsemane or on Mount Calvary, whether from men, from devils, or from God, were wholly and solely for the church; for as many as He in the councils of eternity became surety for. "He suffered, just for the unjust, to bring us to God." He drank the cup of trembling, dregs, and damnation, that we might "feast on fat

things," partake of living waters, and "take the cup of salvation." He

" ———— toiled for our ease,
And for our safety bled."

O to have a personal interest in his expiatory death, precious blood-shedding, and absolute redemption! O may God sanctify his dealings to our souls, and give us such a measure of grace as shall enable us to remain passive in his hands, comply with his will, and do and suffer all his good pleasure!

Afflictions are not joyous, but grievous, to our flesh and blood. We all love ease; and I have often felt, when sharply tried, as if I could sacrifice every honest principle to possess ease. The day of adversity and suffering is a solemn time. "I will (saith God) bring the third part through the fire, and will refine them as silver is refined, and will try them as gold is tried. They shall call on my name, and I will hear them. I will say, It is my people; and they shall say, 'The Lord is my God.'" (Zech. xiii. 9.) I have sometimes trembled at these words, and have shrunk from the heavy trials here implied; and when in the furnace, and to my own views and feelings about to be consumed; when my life was almost insupportable, I have had such hard thoughts of God, and have felt so brimful of enmity, rebellion, and desperation, that I am astonished at the patience and long-suffering of God. No lost soul that now groans in hell more deserves such a fate than I! Frequently have I murmured, "Lord, I cannot bear this hot furnace; have mercy on me, O God! have pity on me; remember I am but dust! Give me ease or cut me off; my soul chooseth strangling, and death rather than life! Hast thou given me grace and faith only to try me? Why am I dealt with so severely, while others tread a smoother path? 'Thou hast chastised me, and I was chastised as a bullock unaccustomed to the yoke. Turn thou me and I shall be turned, for thou art the Lord my God.'" (Jer. xxxi. 18.) Blessed be God, he hath not left me here, but hath mercifully intermixed his comforts with my sorrows; hath held up my head above the raging billows and swelling waves of tribulation, and hath supported my poor sinking soul with his grace. My poor parched heart hath been moistened and refreshed with a distilling of spiritual rain and dew. He hath shed abroad his all-conquering, sin-subduing love in my heaving breast; and while I have adored his sovereignty, I have triumphed in his mercy, and been brought by a sweet sense of his goodness to adoring wonder and holy admiration, deep abasement and solemn prostration of spirit. I have sometimes said, "Welcome afflictions, welcome sorrows, welcome death; 'for this God is my God for ever and ever, and he will be my guide even unto death.'" Thus have I experienced a sweetness in affliction; and when, by faith, I am enabled to see that my own good and the glory of God are inseparable, my soul thus pours itself out in prayer: "Lord, give me patience; thou art the God of patience, I have none without thou art pleased to give it me. O bless me

with humility, and with an abiding sense of thy amazing mercies to me, the chief of sinners; and since thou hast pardoned all my sins, and art become my salvation, may I be well content to and suffer the good pleasure of thy solemn Majesty!"

Sometimes, when reflecting upon the penal sufferings of Jesus, and contrasting the unspeakable difference between my sorrows and the sorrows, groans, and throes, burning agonies, and horrors of the poor suffering Saviour, I am ashamed of myself that a murmur should ever escape my lips. An eternity of hopeless misery must I have endured in hell but for Jesus Christ, who bore the punishment I deserved.

A further view of these things will humble us before God, and make us walk humbly with God. O how sweet to be led to see that from aforetime God blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Jesus Christ! There is, indeed, an everlasting solemnity in the cross of Christ. The immutable counsels and glorious designs of God hinge (if I may so express myself) upon the doing and the dying of God's incarnate Son. If I boast at all, let it be in the cross of Christ. If I glory at all, let it be in God; that I know something of him as a God pardoning iniquity, transgression, and sin, through the blood of Christ my Lord, to whom be glory in the church. Amen.—Yours affectionately,

London, Oct. 7, 1842.

P. R.

A LETTER FROM THE LATE DANIEL HERBERT.

My dear Brother,—I take the liberty to address you as such, because I believe we are kindred souls, loved with the same love, and redeemed by the same blood; and that Jehovah, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, planned and fixed our everlasting salvation from the days of old, and that on our behalf was made that indissoluble, irrevocable, and unalterable covenant, where our names were entered in the eternal book of life, as the elect of God the Father, to be redeemed by God the Son, and to be quickened (as I trust we are) by God the Holy Ghost. Therefore I write to you as a blood-bought sinner, one redeemed from the law's curse, whose debts are paid, whose salvation is secure, whose righteousness is complete, whose justification is certain, and for whom there never was, *nor can be*, any condemnation.

I have read your friendly epistle over and over again; and, as you wish me to be explicit, I will answer it in my plain way, as it becomes one of the royal stock, a kindred soul, a brother in Jesus, and a heir of the same inheritance. I duly received your favour, by which you lay me under an obligation that I fear I shall never be able to cancel.

But what you gave to me to God is lent;
I know my God will pay you ten per cent.

It gives me infinite pleasure to hear that my hymns and poems have been any profit to you and others. I will be bold to say that I am firmly persuaded that no pharisee, no free-willer, no Arminian,

no workmonger, no Arian, no Socinian, and no one untaught of the Spirit of God, can ever read them with approbation; for they were written by a poor, ruined, helpless sinner, made glad of salvation in a way that just suits a poor bankrupt, who has neither money nor price. You make mention in your letter of having a few who know salvation to be all of grace, through the righteousness of the God-Man, the elect's Surety. Bless God for a few! where are we to go to find many? The Bible, my dear friend, gives us no authority to expect this: "A remnant shall be saved." You say most of the professors about you are either pharisees or Antinomians. I don't wish to have the characters of your pharisees, for I know them well; but I should like to know a little of your "Antinomians," because 'tis the name I bear among the pharisees of this place. Now I will tell you what an Antinomian* I am. I am a poor, ruined, helpless, undone man; completely lost as to anything I could do to help myself. But God has laid my help upon the Almighty Jesus, through whom I have redemption and the forgiveness of all my sins. I am a sinner saved, eternally saved, in which salvation I had no more hand than in my creation. Now, if you think this letter worthy a reply, let me

[* We feel an objection to acknowledge the title "Antinomian" as properly applied to such as Daniel Herbert and ourselves, for more than one reason. 1. Because it is a term of reproach. Now, though to be reproached is the lot of the people of God, that is no reason why they themselves should voluntarily assume such a badge. 2. It is a term inapplicable to the living family of God. For what is its meaning? It means, literally, "one opposed to law." But this is not the case with any taught of God. They are not opposed to the law, properly so called, that is, the ministration of condemnation and death. On the contrary, though they do not allow it to be the rule of life to a believer, yet they believe that it is "holy, just, and good;" and that it is the instrument in the hands of the Holy Spirit to bring the soul in guilty before God, and thus fit it for the reception of the gospel. Nor, again, are they opposed to "the perfect law of liberty;" but believe it to be the rule of Christian walk and conversation. Nor are they opposed to "the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus;" for by it they are "made free from the law of sin and death." (Rom. viii. 2.) Nor are they opposed to "the law of the land;" but "submit themselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake." (1 Pet. ii. 13.) The Apostle says expressly that we "are not without law to God, but under law" (as the passage should have been translated) "to Christ." (1 Cor. ix. 21.) As, therefore, it cannot be said truly of any Christian that he is "against or opposed to law," we cannot recognize the term "Antinomian" as applicable to him. 3. It has come to signify generally a loose and careless liver, one who continues in sin that grace may abound; and as the people of God are "zealous of good works," and "created in Christ Jesus unto them," they are especially bound to reject a title which is considered applicable to ungodly men, who do evil that good may come. 4. As there are real Antinomians in the professing church of God, "spots in their feasts of charity," "trees twice dead plucked up by the roots," in a word, such characters as are described by Jude and Peter, the people of God are especially bound to reject a title which identifies them with such ungodly persons. For these reasons, we neither call ourselves "Antinomians," nor ever allow ourselves to be so called without protesting against the title.]

We have read that the compiler of "A History of all Religions" once wrote to Mr. Huntington, asking him to give him an account of the creed and sentiments of the sect called "Antinomians," as he was generally called one of them. Mr. H. treated his letter with contempt; and returned it no answer. Indeed, throughout his works, we believe, he applies the term Antinomian to ungodly professors of the doctrines of grace.—Eds.]

know how far my character tallies with that of the Lincolnshire Antinomians. For my own part, I frankly declare that I am such an Antinomian as I wish to live and hope to die; for had I ten thousand tongues I would use them all in exalting the praise and glory of free, sovereign, unsought, efficacious grace, that made me accepted in the Beloved. But as for professors in general, they are, I suppose, as much alike as are the painted tombs, which look beautiful on the outside but are all rottenness within. The wise man has truly said, "There is a way that seemeth right to a man, but his ways are the ways of death." Don't startle, my friend. Methinks I hear you say, "O what am I? Where am I? What is my creed? On what foundation do I stand? Am I not the chaff instead of the wheat? Am I not a goat, and not a sheep? Am I not a bastard, and not a free-born child?"

But whence does this arise? Why, from that spirit which leads us to look for purity in that heart which, as you observe, is deceitful above all things and desperately, nay *devilishly* wicked. For old Adam nature will always remain the same; and those who talk of sanctified nature know not what sanctification means. As for your fears of being an hypocrite, recollect that the "old devil," who forged that lie, was a liar from the beginning, and has had almost six thousand years' practice, and knows how to attack us on our weak sides. But when we are sensibly weak in ourselves, and Christ is all in all, we are too strong for the devil. "For the kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent taketh it by force;" and who are these but mighty strong ones who can from the heart cry, "God be merciful to me a sinner!" or, like the poor woman, "Lord, help me!" But perhaps my dear brother is still saying, "How shall I know for certainty that I am in the right way?" Let the declaration made by our adorable Jesus settle the point. Christ says, "I am the way, the truth, and the life." Then if Christ is the only right way, all others must be wrong. If Christ is the truth, then all the religion man may possess; that has not Christ as the Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, is a lie. If Christ is the life, all profession without Christ tends to death; and this is the reason that it may be said of many places, "Death is in the pot." Then may you, my valued friend, attend to the old Prophet Jeremiah's advice: "Stand ye in the way, and inquire for the good old paths, and you shall find rest for your souls." But as Noah's dove found no rest but in the ark, so the guilty sinner, who has once felt the love of God manifest to his soul, finds no rest but in Jesus; and that is only attained when God gives faith to believe that Christ was made sin for us, and that we are made the righteousness of God in him. Then, when God gives us peace, who can create trouble? My prayer to God is, that you may possess a larger measure (if it be the will of God) of that faith which it is the work of Jehovah the Father to create, the work of Jehovah Jesus to establish, and the work of Jehovah the Holy Ghost to keep in lively exercise; that faith which works by love, and has the God of love to work it.

I am afraid I shall tire your patience; but, looking over your

letter, I find I have not yet done. It seems to me to be the wish of my friend to know who and what I am; but perhaps, if I tell him all, I shall hear no more from him. I am a poor old sinner, often ready to cry, with Paul, "O wretched man that I am!" At other times, I can sing my triumphant song, "Thanks be to God, who giveth me the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." Sometimes rejoicing, sometimes mourning, sometimes fearing, but never despairing. I will now frankly tell you what I have been, as well as what I am at present. I was for many years engaged in the woollen manufacture, and employed more than a hundred hands. For many years I was successful, and pride began to creep into my heart on account of my imaginary independence. I dealt largely with a house in London, from my connection with which I had large expectations. Upon one occasion, I drew upon them two bills of upwards of £700 on account; and when they became due the house failed, and my bills were returned on my hands. I lost every shilling, and have never since recovered a penny. This broke me down, and I gave up business immediately. I found I had nearly enough to pay my creditors; but I have never been in business since, except in a very trifling way. O my dear friend, none but my God knows what I have experienced; but though I have gone with a broken heart, yet I trust I can say that, while treading tribulation's ground, I have had sweet manifestations of the love of God, infinitely more valuable than the hundreds I lost. I have also brought up a large family, having had fourteen children; but only four of them are now living, all of whom are settled in London. I had a dear daughter about nine months ago, upwards of twenty years of age. She was one of the Lord's precious jewels. I watched her bedside nearly five days and nights; and, could I see you, I would read to you what I wrote at her bedside. Heart-rending but soul-rejoicing scene!

But methinks my friend is ready to exclaim, "But how do you live now?" If such a question had been proposed to the prophet Elijah, he would have told you that God sent him bread and flesh in the morning, and bread and flesh in the evening; and that when one brook was dried up the Lord directed him to another. And as the Lord made the handful of meal and the little oil hold out for the prophet, the widow, and her son for a whole year, so the very same God is my provider; but how I cannot tell you.

This, my dear friend, is a small part of my history; let it suffice for the present. If I should ever see you, I will tell you ten times more. But my paper is almost full, and I must not forget to thank you for your kind present, which I shall leave my Father and Banker to make up to you. I also acknowledge myself gratified at your liberal invitation, which I must not think of accepting; for, were I to visit G—, I fear your opinion would tally with my own, that I did not pay carriage.

God bless you, and shine upon your soul! and, when it is well with you, remember poor

Sudbury, Dec. 25, 1817.

DANIEL HERBERT.

"THEM THAT HONOUR ME I WILL HONOUR."

Monday, January 30th, 1843.

My dear ———, I was glad to hear that you are about to follow the Lord Jesus Christ through the ordinance of believer's baptism. May your soul be much blest in it. Many may find it only a shell; but I believe some are so favored as to find a kernel with the shell, in the Lord's presence being manifested on the occasion. Whoever may slight and despise it, we have on record how blessedly the Trinity bore testimony to it, when Jesus Christ was baptized. (Matt. iii. 16, 17.) "Whosoever shall do the will of God, shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God." I dare say you are anxious to know the proceedings here yesterday respecting it. There was a very large concourse of people both times, and many children of God scattered through this neighbourhood were gathered together, distant and near. There were many from mere curiosity, and many could not get even standing room, particularly in the afternoon. I went through a regular service, and then baptized seven women and five men, and after the afternoon service I baptized six women and five men. It seems a great number to be baptized in one day by a minister called so narrow-minded.

This, however, is the first time of baptizing with us, and it is nearly fourteen years since I came into this neighbourhood; and more than eleven years since I left the Church of England. In the morning I felt rather shut up in speaking, but in the afternoon I was blest with a little power and liberty, and I trust and believe that the Lord was with us, and several, I understand, found it good to be there. What a different feeling I had in going down from the pulpit to baptize those of whom I had a good hope that they were partakers of grace according to the mode so clearly stated in the word of God, from what I used to experience when I had to descend from the pulpit in the Church of England to sprinkle infants, and to give a flat contradiction to what I stated in the pulpit respecting regeneration, &c., at the same time encouraging the blind and ignorant godfathers and godmothers in their sin and mocking of God, who came forward so boldly and carelessly to make such awful vows and promises. I am satisfied many things may be bought too dear, even gold, but one thing cannot, which is a good conscience.

I have now something to relate, in which I trust you and the other friends at O—, will feel interested, and will be glad to hear; and may the Lord make it a blessing, and may He have all the praise. It is a new strain for me to begin with, "My heart is inditing a good matter; I speak of the things which I have made touching the king; my tongue is the pen of a ready writer." After talking over the proceedings of the day with four friends, I retired (on Lord's day evening) to bed in a comfortable state of mind, feeling thankful that the Lord had brought me through a trying day, concerning which I had been much exercised, and trusting the Lord had blest the word to some that day through my

a worm as I felt myself to be, as well as owning his own Ordinance, to which we had been attending. When I knelt down to offer up a few words by the bedside, I felt my soul drawn out to God, and humbled low before him with a sense of my sins; but as soon as I was in bed I began to feel a melting of heart, and a sweet sense of God's love to my soul, which immediately made my tears flow, and the Lord sweetly began to apply precious promises to my soul with unction and power, and to such an extent as I have never been blest with before; in fact, I have never experienced any such blessed manifestation and sweet deliverance, though I have been blest at different times that I can mention, but they were far short of this sweet blessing to my soul, and the savour of it sweetly abides with me still, but I am afraid of losing it, or of being robbed of it. When the promises began to flow into my soul, these words came with as great power, and as often as any: "Awake and sing, ye that dwell in dust; for thy dew is as the dew of herbs;" and again and again: "I have blotted out as a thick cloud thy transgressions, and as a cloud thy sins; return unto me for I have redeemed thee;" "I will honor them that 'honor me;" "He that hath my commandments and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me, and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him;" and I did sweetly experience this manifestation of love to my soul; and I said to the blessed Lord, "Let him kiss me with the kisses of his mouth," "for his mouth is most sweet." The promises flowed into my soul, and my tears flowed so fast that I soon began to water my couch with tears of joy, and not of sorrow. I lay till between twelve and one o'clock in this blessed state, and then fell asleep for about two hours, and awoke in a delightful frame, the Lord blessing my soul again, till I had to restrain myself from crying aloud. I did not go to sleep again, but lay awake, blessing and praising God for his goodness and mercy to my soul, with debasing views of myself, and with exalted views of the blessed Jesus, having communion and fellowship with him in his agony and sufferings. But during my soul enjoyment I kept saying at times, "Is it real, Lord? Is it real, Lord?" I wanted to know whether it was real. I asked myself whether I was willing to die, and I felt I was, and if it were the Lord's will, I was willing to die without telling any one of his great goodness to my soul; for the Lord's will was my will. I asked myself whether I would rather have a large bag of gold, or this blessing, and I felt a large bag of gold was no more to me than a large bag of pebbles, compared to the Lord's rich blessing. These words came to my mind sweetly again and again:

"Now will I tell to sinners round
What a dear Saviour I have found."

And Hart's hymn,

"Blest Spirit of truth, Eternal God, &c.,"

was sweet to my soul. I went up and told I. K. early in the morning, and could not refrain from crying, and could scarcely shave myself, through shedding tears so fast. I shed more tears last night

than I have shed for years, for my tears do not flow so easily as many people's do. These words came with power, "Sing, O ye heavens, for the Lord hath done it," &c.; and also, "Though your sins be as scarlet they shall be white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool." This has been to my soul "a feast of fat things, of fat things full of marrow, and of wine on the lees well refined," for "the vision is yet for an appointed time, but at the end it shall speak, and not lie; though it tarry wait for it, because it will surely come, it will not tarry." You, as well as others, know I have had to wait, and have been much tried, because the Lord has not blest me more with His presence and manifestations of His love. He has given me a few sips by the way, both in preaching and at a throne of grace, and in times of need and temptation. But I have known to my sorrow what it is to sit in the dust, almost without hope whether the Lord would ever put a new song in my mouth. These words were brought again and again: "Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me, bless His Holy name; bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all His benefits; who forgiveth all thine iniquities, who healeth all thy diseases, who redeemeth thy life from destruction, who crowneth thee with loving-kindness and tender mercies." I have gone on in the ministry ready to halt with sorrow before me, with my soul much discouraged because of the way, and had not the Lord given me seals to my ministry and testimonies now and then to my soul, surely I must have fainted by the way. If the blessing had come twelve hours sooner, some one else must have preached and baptized, for I could have done neither, through blessing, praising, and crying for joy. Very many of my hearers would have said, it was not enthusiasm in the bud but in the flower, for they are strangers to such feelings. "The heart knoweth its own bitterness, but a stranger doth not intermeddle with his joy." And how clearly did I see David's wisdom in saying, "Come and hear, all ye that fear God, and I will declare what he hath done for my soul." David well knew if they did not know a secret in religion, they would not be able to understand a work of grace upon the soul. I have been long kept on short commons, and I have had great murmurings and rebellion respecting it, and now the Lord is pleased to lead my soul into green pastures; but how long I am to be favoured, I know not, but this I know, I feel grateful for what the Lord has granted me, and I love Him, and can bless His Holy name. "O that men would praise the Lord for his goodness, and for his wonderful works to the children of men."

I have been led to know my vileness, and to feel much of the depravity of my heart, so as to be sensibly a poor lost ruined sinner. Sometimes I have envied the brute creation; and at times I have thought God would strike me dead, being sensible of so much sin in my heart. I felt sure I had but little grace, if I had any at all, and my mind lately has been much tried respecting the formation of a church here, seeing it a grievous thing that the ordinances of

God's house should be slighted and neglected year after year by those who, I believe, were the proper persons to attend to them; I could therefore see the need of church order and government, much better than I could see in any way my fitness to be a pastor. So I was in great straits, and looked forward to the ordinance next Lord's day with much exercise and trial of mind, having to administer it in my darkness of soul, and knowing also that there is such a thing as eating and drinking unworthily, and that such "eat and drink damnation (or condemnation) to themselves, not discerning the Lord's body." On Friday evening I was with two friends who were speaking of the Lord's manifestations to their souls, but I was dumb, and could say nothing, and felt as if I could not possibly stand in the position I was placed, being so dark, shut up and tried. On Saturday, too, I felt much darkness and trial of mind, but I little thought that God's great goodness and mercy were so soon to be manifested to my soul. I have had sips, but now my cup is full and even runneth over. In the days of adversity, I have considered how the scene would end, but now in the day of prosperity my soul is joyful. "I will be glad and rejoice in thy mercy, for thou hast considered my trouble, thou hast known my soul in adversities, and hast not shut me up into the hand of the enemy; thou hast set my foot in a large room." "The blessing of the Lord, it maketh rich, and He addeth no sorrow with it." The Lord continues to bless my soul with His love, and Christ is precious; and I am sure the Lord's spiritual blessings to my soul do not lead to worldliness and licentiousness, but to deadness to the world and to separation in spirit from it. Real faith works by love, and Christ is truly precious, and there is no true victory over the world but through this blessed experience known and felt in the soul; and love to Jesus is accompanied with love to the brethren, and with earnest and sincere prayers for the children of God. "They shall prosper that love Zion." Before this blessing, I looked forward to the ordinance of the Lord's Supper as a man would who had a great payment to make, and had not wherewith to pay; he wishes that there was no such engagement, or that the time was farther distant, and now I can look upon it as the man would upon the payment, if any one had given him all or more than the money.

Tuesday morning.—The Lord's goodness still follows me, but this night was not like the previous; that will be a night to be much remembered by me. I have had these words brought to my mind very sweetly, "Thou art fairer than the children of men; grace is poured into thy lips, therefore God hath blessed thee for ever." I never went out of doors yesterday, but I. K. was amongst the friends, and I am glad to say that he brought in good tidings, for he had heard that the ordinance of baptism was much blessed on Lord's day; and I hope the Lord's blessing may specially rest upon the friends at O— on the 19th. What a little cross it is to bear, for those who have any sense of the crosses, sufferings, and afflictions and agonies that the Lord Jesus Christ, who was harmless,

had to endure for the vilest and basest sinners. I believe many are not tried so much about the cross of it, as they are about their fitness to be baptized. It has been a profitable time for the Lord's people here during the formation of the church, through having to give in their experience, and the hearing of the experience of others has revived their souls.

Give my love to all inquiring friends, and I believe some will be glad to hear that the Lord has visited my soul with blessed promises and testimonies of his love.—Yours affectionately,

Abingdon, Jan. 31, 1843.

W. T.

“MY SOUL FOLLOWETH HARD AFTER GOD.”

Every soul is pursuing after something. The covetous after money, the proud after honours, praise, and applause. Every unregenerated soul has some object, and the ultimate end of its pursuits is self. Self is the God he worships and adores; self-love, self-applause, self-importance, self-consequence, self-preservation, self-righteousness, and self-salvation. And the god of this world having blinded their eyes, they cannot see themselves, they cannot know themselves, they have not the knowledge of themselves, nor of God, nor of Christ. Satan having seated himself in the soul of the unregenerate, has blinded all the windows of their understandings, (“their foolish minds being darkened,”) so that they cannot see that, in seeking their own pleasure, they are seeking, worshipping, and following after him. For ignorant self is Satan's temple, where he sits to be worshipped as God. Self is the great idol temple where Satan resides, and the dark, unregenerate soul of man is full of idols round about. Free will is the Arminian god; head-knowledge of the doctrines is the dead Calvinist's god. Nature itself is the atheist's god. There are numberless other gods in the fancies, opinions, and imaginations of man's heart; but “he follows his own spirit, and has seen nothing,” till the Spirit of truth quickeneth, convinceth, and enlighteneth his soul to see where he hath been, where he is, and what he must be made; and to have a knowledge of “the only true God and Jesus Christ whom he hath sent,” to destroy the works of the devil, knock these idols down, drive the thieves out of the temple, and establish the true worship of the true and living God in the soul. “And this is life eternal; to know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent.”

What a mercy that the glorious and gracious Father of mercies is pleased to put his own nature into the soul when born again; life, light, and love are communicated to the new creature in Christ Jesus. The life of God being in the soul, it now grows in the light and love, (or grace,) and in the knowledge of the dear Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. No vegetable, plant, or animal can grow without light and air. The soul having received divine life, it must have light; for Jesus saith, “Whoever followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.” Therefore the soul grows in the light

and love of God, and is kept alive by the holy air, or breath of the eternal Spirit; and as the soul grows in the knowledge of Christ, and his precious soul-cleansing blood, so it follows after him. As it grows in a knowledge of his person, righteousness, precious love, and salvation, the closer it follows him; and, like a babe on the bosom, it cannot rest without his kisses, his smiles, and fresh tokens of his sweet and precious love. Like a child just running alone, it follows him, crying after him wherever he goes. "These are they who follow the Lamb wheresoever he goes," and are never contented but in his presence, enjoying his smiles. So far so good. But as the soul grows in grace, and in the knowledge of Christ, so sin seems to grow stronger in the unrenowned nature, and the soul grows in a greater knowledge of depravity and innate lusts and corruptions; and those stalking, giant-like lusts and passions which we thought were dead and buried are found again alive, disputing our right to the promised land, and opposing us in our march. And perhaps the wily Gibeonites come to deceive us with their old clouted shoes, and mouldy, leavened bread, and we make a league with them before we are aware, and cannot destroy them. Then come Giant Guilt, Giant Fear, and Giant Lust, calling for help from Giant Despair to destroy us. All these hinder us in our march towards the promised land, and oppose our approach to God.

Now the poor soul finds it hard work to make any further advances into the presence of God, yet through patience hopes to inherit the promises. But here is some hard work for faith. "My soul followeth hard after God." Ah, hard work indeed for faith! For if we have any true or living faith, we shall surely have to fight; and if ours is only a dead faith, we shall not hold out to the end, but "turn back in the day of battle." Come, soul, thou must "resist unto blood," for these giants are strong, tall, and stubborn. Now these giants fall foul upon the poor soul. The eye, not being single, was turned off from the Captain; the sword and shield failed; and these giants made some dreadful wounds in the poor soul, and there was a great loss of blood, and a sad bleeding conscience. And you know when persons lose much blood from gaping wounds, it creates a great thirst within. Samson, in his hard fighting, thought he should die of thirst. Under these dreadful wounds the poor soul feels a burning thirst, and fears it is all over with it. It gasps for breath, yet cannot forget God. "My soul followeth hard after God," "my soul thirsteth for God," as cried David when fighting with the enemies of God and his soul. O the pantings, soul-famishings, groanings, sighings, cryings, thirstings, and throat-dryings! "My soul thirsteth for God, even for the living God; when shall I come and appear before him?" Ah, sirs, a soul that hath known and felt the precious love of Christ, cannot easily give it all up for lost. "My soul followeth hard after God." After God! the living God! Not a dead god, in a dead sermon, in the dead letter, from a dead parson, amongst the congregation of the dead. No, no! it is a living soul-thirsting for the living God; and blessed are those who thirst for God here, for they shall not thirst in

hell. The good and gracious God will give these poor souls a drink of the living water, and drop a little oil and wine into their wounds, and bind them up with some healing leaves from the Tree of Life, and they shall live to fight a good fight of faith, and lay fast hold on eternal life in Christ Jesus. And at the very sight or name of our glorious Captain, the giants and all the inhabitants of the land will faint, and become as dead men, and ye shall possess the land, all the land of the promises of God in Christ Jesus. And we are blessed in him.

But the old tempter and the old heathens follow hard after us, tempting us to serve other gods; and we have an Achan in our hearts, given to covetousness, which is idolatry; and when the accursed thing, sin, is concealed, Satan knows that we cannot stand before our enemies. "Be assured that your sin will find you out." Achan must be stoned to death and burnt; but seemingly another Achan arises from his ashes. O when will Achan and all his family be stoned to death, and buried in the ground? It must be when the body of death, when the accursed thing, sin, shall be consigned to the grave, and dirt and stones shall fall and rattle upon the coffin. But though this poor body must die, the curse of God shall fall upon sin wherever it is found. My poor, trembling "soul follows hard after God," for Jesus, precious Jesus, took the accursed sinner's place, yea, and was made "sin for us;" and all our sins were laid on him, and sin, the accursed thing, was cursed in him, when he died on the tree a cursed death, and was made a curse for us. For "God sent his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, and so condemned sin in the flesh." O dear and most merciful God and Father, even in this valley of Achor thou hast opened to us a door of hope! Jesus burst the tomb door, and opened a way by his own blood out of this hellish world of sin, (the hell which sin hath made in our poor souls,) and by his resurrection hath opened the door of heaven. Glory to his name! by his own blood a door of access is opened by the eternal Spirit to the Father. "My soul followeth hard after God;" "thy right hand upholdeth me," or I had fallen by my enemies to rise no more; I had sunk into hell, and descended into the bottomless pit to all eternity. Poor, helpless sinner, remain in the valley, it is there that the door of hope opens; climb not, with the wild goats, the mountains of presumption, self-importance, carnal confidence, and self-conceit. Know thyself; know that thou art a cursed and condemned sinner in thyself, till the Lord opens the door of hope in Christ's blood, and the Holy Comforter leads thy soul to Christ as a sinner saved, justified, and blessed in him, and helps thee to climb up the secret places of the stairs in the rocks. Jacob's ladder is there; and the angels shall conduct thee to the top of it, and there shalt thou see God. "My soul followeth hard after God;" thy right hand holdeth me on the ladder; thou upholdest my soul in life and in communion with thee; and when thou holdest me up I am safe and comfortable. If thou leavest me I sink into myself, which is sin, misery, bondage, and death.

Now the quickened soul cannot lie at ease in Antinomian licen-

tiousness, nor run with self-righteous Arminian legs; the Lord takes no pleasure in licentiousness or self-righteousness. The poor soul is squeezed into a narrow way that no fowl knoweth, and feels as if it could not move a step in the way, and yet is moving all the time. For the way is moving him on to God every moment; and though the way he is in is "a highway," he seems to travel in a low way, through miry, thorny, and dark places. "A highway shall be there, and a way." The soul being in Christ, the high and holy way, it is brought through the other dark way, though with fear and trembling.

The soul that is born of God can never be happy without God, but longs after his smiles, his presence, and his love. When the Lord hides his face, that soul is troubled, and cries, groans, and grieves after him; and when the Lord answers no prayers, and seems to wound the soul with the wound of an enemy, it pants after him yet the more. If I flog my little boy for his faults on a journey, and say I will leave him behind me on the road in the dark, he will follow hard after me, claiming the relationship and love that still remain, and grieving he had been such a bad boy to so kind a father. Besides, he would be afraid to be left behind alone, and in the dark, and would run panting, fretting, and crying, "O father, stay; father, don't leave me alone in the dark!" till his cries and tears would move the very bowels of his father, who would take his child in his arms, and fondly embrace him. And it easeth the father as much to embrace the child, as the child is eased by being in his father's arms. "As a father pitieth his own children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him." O! "my soul followeth hard after God." He is a good, kind, and gracious Father, even to disobedient children. Remember the prodigal son, who said, "I will arise, and go to my father." The son might have *walked*, for anything we know to the contrary; but the father "*ran*, and fell upon his neck, and kissed him."

A quickened and adopted soul doth not walk after the flesh, but after the Spirit; but the flesh, Satan, liars, thieves, and murderers will walk after the poor soul, to do it a mischief if possible. But the desire of the soul is after God; and if overtaken by these thieves, and knocked down, as soon as it comes to itself again, it "followeth hard after God," and the Lord will take part with all them that fear (or love) him. But "those who seek my soul to destroy it shall go into the lower parts of the earth, and the mouth of all them that speak lies shall be stopped;" (Ps. lxxiii. 11;) yea, all the liars within and liars without. "Thine enemies shall be found liars unto thee, and thou shalt tread upon their high places." (Deut. xxxiii. 29.)

Leicester, June 18, 1842.

A WATCHMAN ON THE WALLS.

SCRAPS FROM PRIVATE CORRESPONDENCE.

My dear Friends,—I thank you for your kind letters, so freely written, and would at all times request you to write from *feeling*. I would not thank any one to write to me unless they did so from the heart, for head knowledge will not comfort my soul. When a poor sinner can speak out the feelings of his heart,

it goes to the heart, but in head-knowledge I can find no comfort. I was going to send you a few lines in reply to your question, but as you have addressed me by the name of "Ashur," I must take a little time to see if you have named me rightly. I shall leave asking you any questions why so called, but on referring to Gen. xlix. 20 and Deut. xxxiii. 24, 25, I was led to see the goodness of God's mercy, having had a sweet time in communion with him, and I can truly say that he hath fulfilled his dear word to the utmost. In the first portion of scripture just referred to he says, "His bread shall be fat." Now I can say, in the sight of God, that I have no bread to feed on by faith but Christ Jesus, and I can say that all my troubles in the wilderness, and all the temptations of Satan, only give me a better appetite to feed on the Bread of Life. I do assure you that my bread, of late, has been so fat that, in feeding upon it, the bones that stuck out have been covered, and my poor tongue has been so clotted that my soul hath had no vent through the tongue to bless and praise the name of the Lord. The only vent that I could find was in pouring out the feelings of my heart in tears for his having filled my soul with marrow and fatness, in which I have found a sweet nearness to a precious Jesus, and a precious Jesus near unto me. What Paul said I have found to be true, for whether in the body or out of it I could not tell, but I rejoiced in God with joy unspeakable and full of glory. All my crooks and crosses have been covered in the enjoyment of the love of God, and Christ Jesus as my all in all. Whilst reading over that portion of scripture, "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?" (Rom. viii. 25,) there flowed in a sweetness to my soul which enabled me to see that it was Jesus only who said, "I will never leave thee nor forsake thee." What a mercy it is to me and you that all temptations, all darkness, all doubts, all fears, and all rebellion in the wilderness will not separate us from the love of Christ. This is love worth telling about; this is love that will beget love; this is the marrow and fatness that will cause the poor sinner born of God to go forth with weeping and supplication in a straight way wherein he shall not stumble, and that by the rivers of water. And here all words fail to show forth the fullness of the love of Christ; for it is written, "I am a Father to Israel." (Jer. xxxi. 9.) What a mercy it is that such a worm of the earth as I am should be blessed with the love of Christ! This is sweetly shown, I think, in Ezek. xlvii. 2. "There ran out waters on the right side." The love of Christ is never felt in the soul until we are brought to know ourselves as sinners. It is first ankle deep, then knee deep, after that it is up to the loins, and latterly it is a river that cannot be passed over. No, my dear friends, we shall never be able to pass over that river of the love of Christ, for it is as it were a boundless ocean, without bottom, brim, or shore; no beginning or ending. We are only ankle deep while in the wilderness, but when we are freed from this body of sin and death, Christ will be all in all. In Deut. xxxiii. 24, 25, it is said, "He shall dip his foot in oil." Now,

my path, at times, has been so smooth that I can go on my way rejoicing, for "oil maketh the face to shine." "No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper, and every tongue that shall rise against thee thou shalt condemn;" and in all my doubts and fears the word has been fulfilled, and I believe will be.

I am glad to hear you had a little comfort from the word last Lord's day, and I do hope that the dear Lord will give you, now and then, sweet nearness to himself, so that you may have songs in the night; and my prayer is, that the eternal Spirit would so glorify a dear and precious Jesus to you, and in you, that you may be able to say from the inner man, "My Lord and my God." You requested me to send you "passing thoughts," and these are some of them; but some that I have had, and which I dare not mention, would cause you to say, "What a vile and filthy heart must Ashur have!" I never felt so much as I did last night under —. My mind was so straitened that I wished he would stop his sermon before it was half finished. He delivered great and glorious truths. He spoke of "approving things that are excellent;" and I was ready to exclaim, "What a sweet view to behold Jesus, with his own blood, entering into the holy of holies for us sinners, and that for ever; so that all our vile sins, all our darkness, all our doubts, and all our fears, will not turn away his love from us, for it is an everlasting love!" I do not know that your path in this wilderness will be easy to flesh and blood; but your God will make himself known to you, and his gracious promise, "I will never leave thee nor forsake thee," will be known and felt by you in this vale of tears. I often think of the ways of our God; how he holdeth up those who are oft cast down, and filled with doubts and fears. Although at a distance in body, yet I am, God is my witness, often present in spirit at the throne of grace; and I do hope, my dear friends, that you will remember a poor worm when you get into the inner court, and find Jehovah Jesus precious to your souls; for we are one in him. I do not think that we shall fall out by the way in giving glory to the God of all grace; for in *your* blessing him I shall bless him also, and at last we shall say, "He hath done all things well." Bear with me, and pardon me; but it seems as if I could pour out my soul to the Lord for you, and earnestly plead with him to bless you, and keep you in the right path. His mercy is now partly known, and will be fully known when we get home to glory, for it is now, and will then be, in Jesus only. You will find this a wilderness indeed; and that which the children of old found in it, you and I shall find also. In this wilderness it will be wilderness fare, manna every morning; and yet we, like them, have hearts prone to wander from the way in which we are led. But at the last we shall be constrained to say, "Goodness and mercy have followed us all the days of our life;" and we shall crown Him with everlasting blessing and praise; and in the opening of that which is in Jesus, every thing that we find uneasy and souls here will be lost. This gives us comfort, al-

though while here we only now and then taste of it ; and as we know it is the work of God the eternal Spirit alone to glorify Jesus in our hearts and souls, we go on singing,

“ Though twice ten thousand fears should fill
Our souls with sore dismay,
He is the friend of sinners still,
And hates to put away.

“ Salvation is of God alone,
Grace is a shoreless sea ;
In heaven there's ne'er a vacant throne ;
He hates to put away.”

It is a mercy that our safety with God does not depend on our feelings. We are similar to the children of old. They did not like Jesus to leave them, for sorrow had filled their hearts ; but the dear Lord knew that it was heart sorrow, and, to cheer them up a little, he brings in a “ Nevertheless I tell you the truth ; it is expedient for you that I go away.” “ A little while, and ye shall not see me ; and again, a little while, and ye shall see me.” “ Verily, verily, (here is His promise,) I say unto you that ye shall weep and lament, but the world shall rejoice ; and ye shall be sorrowful, but (that is a blessed ‘ but ’) your sorrow shall be turned into joy.” I would say, Hasten it, dear Lord, for thou hast said, “ I will see you again, and your heart shall rejoice, and your joy no man taketh from you. In me ye shall have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation.” Look over that dear chapter. There are a great many “ shalls ” in it, but as Christ is the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever, our complaining will not get rid of one of them sooner than another ; for it is his will towards us for our good and his own glory. You will say that you have more sorrow than joy, and I may say the same ; but the more sorrow we now have, the sweeter will be the joy when it comes. It would take more time than I at present have to spare to enter into the dear Lord’s words on these things ; but do you, my dear friends, search for them and think on them, and as you dig into the mine you will find more riches than you could find in Satan’s synagogue. The prayer of your brother is, that you may be kept in safety ; for never was there a day of more awful calamity to the children of God than at this time, for “ truth has fallen in our streets, and equity cannot enter.” We find that Satan has been, and still is, coining new things for those who are greedy to follow his pernicious plans, and would, if possible, deceive the child of God ; for should a man who follows error be ever so moral, he is given over to a reprobate mind, and, to come as near the truth as possible, the mind of Satan is at times in him. So, my dear friends, I would say to you, in the words of God, “ Enter into thy closet, and shut thy door.” He that seeth in secret will reward you openly ; for what will it profit us, knowing we are here but for a little while, to give up one grain of gospel truth for the friendship of any one, when shortly both they and we must enter into an eternal state ? “ They that sow to the flesh shall reap corruption ; but he that soweth to the

Spirit shall reap life everlasting." I feel confident he will not leave you, but will give you a lift now and then, according to his precious word, "My God shall supply all your need." How refreshing hath the rain been to the earth! You know that if there were no clouds there would be no rain, but often the clouds appear for days and weeks before the rain comes. The child of God wants refreshing showers, but does not like to see the dark clouds; but no sorrow would want no comfort, no hunger would want no food, and no thirst would want no refreshing drink. Poor David was so parched up that he said, "As the hart panteth after the water-brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God." When these things are felt, we know that no one can satisfy or comfort the soul but God himself; for as cold water is to a thirsty soul, so is good news from a far country. Good news is only brought home by God himself, and if we have but a little, he has said, "A little that a righteous man hath is better than the riches of many wicked." So you see, if we have but a little now and then, it is better than the crackling of thorns under a pot.

My prayer to God is, that you may be kept from seeking the living among the dead, that you may be found waiting upon the Lord, and that your strength may be renewed; for "it is better to wait than to work;" and we have the promise of our God, "I will never leave thee."

I think that no one ever had such a foul, corrupt heart as the poor sinner who now writes; yet I have a hope that one day I shall be free from it, and be with my dear Jesus, to know sweetly his love in its fulness, and shout, "Grace, grace unto Him as the head stone, the foundation stone, the corner stone, my life, my comfort, yea, my everlasting *all!*" for he is everything to his dear children; and let you and me say, "Amen."

December 6, 1842.

Y. J.

LEGAL AND EVANGELICAL REPENTANCE.

Dear Messrs. Editors,—I beg to hand you a letter of Mr. Huntington's, as introductory to some others which I hope to send.

Yours in everlasting bonds, in sure and certain hope of eternal life,

A. N.

Dear Sister in Christ,—Yours came safe to hand, and I have considered it. I will by no means say that the Lord God of Israel had no hand in the work described in your narrative; but this I must confess, that evangelical repentance, which, to my view, is essential to salvation, is not in the account. The new wine was put into an old bottle, and where this is the case, pride will burst the bottle, and the wine will run out, and the old bottle must perish. I mean that your joys were not received into a humble, broken, and contrite heart. God hath promised to give us a new heart, as well as a new

spirit, and when the new wine is put into a new bottle both are preserved. However, the stony heart shall be taken away, and it shall be destroyed, as well as the other parts of the body of sin; for our old man was crucified with Christ; and, under the operation of the Spirit's renewing power, the body of sin shall be put off.

Repentance is two-fold, legal and evangelical. The former is extorted by fears, terrors, and torment, and is always attended with hard thoughts of God and self-pity. This is all the repentance that can be produced in us under the law, where we have nothing before our eyes but our own sins and a sin-avenging God. Evangelical repentance is drawn forth and flows out under the sweet operations of pardoning love, and is attended with a believing view of him whom we have pierced, and with mourning for him; and this is accompanied with a justifying of God, and sympathising with and condoling a suffering Saviour, and with self-abhorrence; and so it is written: "From all your filthiness, and from all your idols will I cleanse you; a new heart will I give unto you, and a new spirit will I put within you; and then ye shall remember your own evil ways, which were not good, and ye shall loathe yourselves in your own sight for your iniquities, when I am pacified toward you." God appearing pacified, and we filled with self-loathing, is the finishing work. When God brings a soul in covenant with him, he accepts us in the Beloved; the atonement applied purges us from our filthiness, and God shines, pacified, reconciled, and well-pleased, in the face of Jesus Christ. All repentance but this needs to be repented of, but this never does; for Christ is exalted to give this repentance to Israel, and the forgiveness of sins; and this repentance is unto life, and is attended with purifying faith. The very text that was sent to you informed you that the humbling rod and the bond of the covenant were wanting in your experience. The rod of God is smiting us with terrors, horrors, flashes of divine anger, reproofs, rebukes, the lashes of conscience, bitter reflections, and smiting us with the application of the threatenings and sentence of a broken law, and with the sore buffetings of Satan, and the killing stings and remorse of guilt.

To come into the bond of the covenant is to have the love of God shed abroad in our heart by the Holy Ghost given unto us. The work on you seems to be very much like that of Hezekiah, much joy and confidence. And no wonder, for at that time he knew nothing of the plague of his own heart; but when God showed him this, his joy, confidence, and hopes all sunk together: "I said, I shall not see the Lord, even the Lord, in the land of the living; I shall behold man no more with the inhabitants of the world; he will cut me off with pining sickness; from day even to night wilt thou make an end of me." (Isa. xxxviii. 11, 12.) And indeed, nothing will hide pride from our eyes but an abiding sense of our own depravity, and of the superabounding and undeserved mercy of God in Christ Jesus to us. May this religion ever rest with thee and me. So prays thy friend and servant in Christ Jesus,

WM. HUNTINGTON.

OBITUARY OF RICHARD LESTER.

Messrs. Editors,—Having at different times read, in your periodical, accounts of the Lord's hand being seen in death, and feeling it very encouraging that, at a time to me so awful and dreadful, the Lord should appear even to make the tongue of the dumb to sing, I am induced to relate some particulars which I witnessed of the latter moments of Mr. Richard Lester.

Mr. L. was an unmarried grasier, living in the village of Manton, near Oakham. He was a hearer among the Wesleyans until about ten or eleven years ago, when Mr. Tiptaft preaching in the Riding School at Oakham, he was induced from curiosity to go, saying it should be for once only. He was, however, so struck with what he heard, that from that time he never missed attending at the Riding School when there was preaching, and afterwards at Providence Chapel, Oakham, when it was opened. He was a remarkably quiet and still man, seldom opening his mouth to any person as to his spiritual feelings, but much separated from the world, and leading a very consistent and exemplary life. It pleased the Lord to visit him with a painful, lingering, and, as it proved, mortal sickness, in the summer of 1842; and it was towards the final close of this illness that what I am going to relate occurred.

He sent for me when he was thus upon his death-bed, wishing to speak to me about the state of his soul. But O! what a weight came upon my spirits; and my soul seemed as if it would sink under the burden. I looked up to the Lord, and sighed, and groaned, and staggered like a drunken man, and knew not what to do, what to say, or how to act, feeling so unfit and so incapable of speaking; and, worst of all, I had no access to the Lord, or any sweet dew-drops from his presence, to cheer and strengthen me to go. However, message after message came for me; so that to stay away was miserable. I therefore started, looking up and sighing out, "O Lord! go with me; open my mouth to speak something that may be blessed to his soul." I trembled from head to foot until I got into the room; but, before I was aware, my burden dropped off, my trembling left me, my mouth was opened, and I began to say that it was all grace,—rich, free, sovereign grace,—that saved poor sinners from hell; that it flowed so freely as to come to such as he and I, independent of all our prayers, sighs, and groans; that it flowed over all the sins which we ever had been guilty of; that there was nothing which could prevent this rich grace and mercy from coming to the soul; and that the business of the soul was to look up unto Him who gave his only-begotten Son, and with him will freely give us all things. I told him how I had gone to the Lord with my heart full of sin, even against love and mercy; how I had felt the power-speaking blood of Jesus; that I was persuaded that he would cast out none who really came to him; and I remarked that in the days of his flesh he received sinners, and ate with them, and likewise healed all who had need of healing. I then asked him how he felt; but

he could hardly give me an answer, because his misery was great. He said, "There is but the brittle thread, and I sink." His friends began to cry, and my heart seemed almost ready to burst. I said, "Shall we go to prayer?" He expressed an earnest wish to do so. I felt my soul solemnly engaged with the Lord, and was enabled to unbosom all my sorrow at his feet, which, for the time, was a great relief, and an evidence that the Lord heard, and would answer. I thought that my friend had a hope, as I never saw him so distressed any more; yet he was very much cast down, but in a short time went to sleep. I therefore left him until the morning.

O the pain and burden which I felt! I never before felt so much for a fellow-creature in my life, and could truly enter into that scripture, "My little children, of whom I travail in birth again, until Christ be formed in you." My sleep departed from me, and I continued looking up and sighing unto my most kind Friend who had so many times heard and delivered my soul.

I went again the next morning, but found Mr. L. no better. We went to prayer again, and I felt satisfied that the Lord was with us. This passage of God's word much encouraged me while in prayer, "If two of you shall agree as touching anything, it shall be done unto you." I was enabled to plead God's faithfulness to his own word, in humble faith expecting at his hand a fulfilment of it.

The next night, I sat up with Mr. L., who all the time seemed very dissatisfied. All the tokens which he had ever received were hidden from his view, and gloominess, darkness, and dreadful forebodings were racking his heart. I asked him if he had not, at times, felt the Lord's presence, and had his word applied; but he said, "No; I never could get at those manifestations which I needed. This made me hang down my head like a bulrush. I used to kneel down and get up again, and think that the Lord would take no notice of me." He said he felt now at the eleventh hour the necessity of the blood and righteousness of Jesus, without which he knew and felt he must sink to rise no more. All his consistency of life, which was exemplary,—all his earnest petitions were passed over, and he fell before the Lord as a poor worthless wretch, and sought him with all his heart and soul; nor would he give him any rest until he felt his sins pardoned, and peace in his conscience. In the middle of the night he asked us to go to prayer. My soul was remarkably blessed; and I was much astonished that every time I bowed the knee with him, the Lord was with me, and opened my mouth, enlarged my heart, and enabled me to pour out my soul before him, with peace and pleasure; while he poured down blessings, in return.

Poor soul! he continued in this gloomy condition until within two days of his death. He seemed to have hardly any faith left, or any hope that the Lord would appear. I made a few remarks on this text, "When the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?" He observed, "Man's extremity is God's opportunity." I answered, "The Lord waiteth to be gracious until all human

power fails, and then he saves the soul. Peter must be sinking, and cry, 'Lord, save! or I perish,' before the Lord stretched forth his hand to save." His soul was sinking, to all human appearances, into the jaws of death, and then into the bottomless pit, before the Lord appeared. It was to me a very trying time, to see one whose life had been consistent, and who had cleaved to truth for some years, and professed to be delivered from the delusive doctrines of Arminianism by the preaching of Mr. Tiptaft, left to die in despair! But, bless the Lord, O my soul, it was not the case. He that had begun the good work carried it on, and accomplished it, to the glory of his own name, and to the encouragement and consolation of our souls.

Previous to Mr. L.'s deliverance, his distresses seemed to come upon him with double force, and he appeared, to those who were with him, as if he was losing his faculties. They immediately sent for me; but, before I got there, he was delivered; the Lord had broke into his mind, and manifested himself to him so powerfully, that he shouted out, "Victory, victory to the Lamb! the Factory* will shine when all the other chapels are in darkness. Mr. T. and Mr. P. are the men!" When I got there, I found a sweet smile upon his cheek, and his soul blessed with that liberty wherewith Christ doth make free. He was truly brought out into a wealthy place, to know, feel, and enjoy the presence and blessing of the Lord God Almighty. He blessed and praised the Lord in such a delightful theme as did my soul good to hear. He then said, "Sing with me." We sang—

"How sweet the name of Jesus sounds," &c.,

in which he joined, and said, "I could never sing before, but I can sing now." Before, it was all sorrow and sighing, but now there was nothing but the voice of joy and gladness, and such a repetition of "Praise the Lord from this time forth and for evermore. Bless the Lord, O my soul; he will bring the top-stone with shoutings of 'Grace, grace unto it! On this Rock will I build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.'" It was truly blessed to see the insight which he had into God's word, the security of the saints, the redemption which there is in Christ, the glories of heaven, and the certainty of every elect soul being brought off more than conqueror. He warned, advised, and encouraged those present. Such as knew Christ, he encouraged in the way; and those who were seeking Christ, he encouraged still to seek, recommending the word of God as the only book able to make wise unto salvation.

He continued in this holy rapture until within an hour of his death; and even then waved his hand, and beckoned to those present to follow him. He never expressed the least doubt after he was delivered, though, at times, the Lord seemed to withdraw a

* Providence Chapel, Oakham, is part of a large building which was formerly a silk factory, and therefore it still retains the name of "The Factory."

little, when he would cry out, "Do not leave me; do bring me to thine everlasting kingdom." And then he would begin again to bless and praise the Lord, and encourage his friends to pray for one another, to meet together as a little band, and to do one another all the good they could, and cease from trifling conversation, which always galls a tender mind, and burdens a tender conscience. Nor can I forbear to mention what a sweet spirit he breathed after his deliverance, manifesting love, meekness, gentleness, in a word, the spirit and mind of Jesus.

There was truly a reality in his case, both as respected his bondage and his deliverance. When in the former, misery was visible in all his expressions and in his countenance; but in the latter, joy and peace in believing; and with this he went to glory.

Truly the memory of the just is blessed. I cannot think of it without feeling my heart leap within me, and desiring to die the death of the righteous.

Manton, near Oakham, Rutland.

H. H.

INQUIRY.

Messrs. Editors,—I just thought that I would take the liberty of again begging the favour of you, and also of your able correspondents, to show me your views on—"The soul that sinneth presumptuously shall die," as in Numbers xv. 30; Deut. xvii. 12, 13; Ps. xix. 13; and 2 Peter ii. 10. In this last case, is it possible that God's children can be intended? for I do sometimes feel, through love, blood, and grace divine, delivered from the curse of the broken law, and also from any union in my soul to legalizers of gospel doctrine and gospel ordinances. And, although the writer is oppressed, distressed, and afflicted in his own soul, under a feeling sense of ignorance, presumption, and impudence, there seems to be pride at the bottom of all my writing, preaching, and praying; yes, and shame to me, Bible-reading too. In preaching, I want boldness to own the ordinances of God's house; in praying, an awful sensation of my empty lip-service distresses me; and in my Bible-readings, I am troubled with as lewd, vile, and presumptuous wanderings, as if all hell was let loose upon me and in me. Therefore, I wish some one to tell us plainly what all this presumption can mean; (for I do not know how to call it by any other name;) and to show whether those who have it are included in God's family; and how we are to distinguish those who have the election of God's grace from those who are dead in sin or mere empty professors.

If you oblige me by inserting the above query, I hope that God will direct some one of my Lord's stewards to enter into the subject as becomes the oracles of God. Yours affectionately in Christ Jesus,

REJECTED ONE.

POETRY.

"HOLD THOU ME UP, AND I SHALL BE SAFE."

Jesus, Lord of life and glory,
 Unto thee we come for peace;
 To thee only tell our story,
 Thou alone canst give us ease.
 Thou art able;
 If thou wilt, to make us clean.

Thou alone art true and holy,
 We are filthy and depraved;
 Make us, Lord, to trust thee solely,
 Teach us, Lord, as sinners saved,
 By thy glory,
 To believe thy promises.

Make us, Lord, with fear and trembling
 To adore thy precious name;
 Grant that we may ne'er be rambling
 From thee, who art e'er the same,
 But continue
 In thy fold, where we are safe,
 Deal.

Grant that we may ne'er be falling;
 Keep us in the narrow way;
 May we ne'er disgrace our calling;
 Take our doubts and fears away;
 And be with us
 Unto all eternity.

When temptations sore assail us,
 And when we are sharply tried,
 Show us thou wilt never fail us;
 Let it drive us to thy side,
 And protect us
 Safe from evil and from sin.

Grant, O grant us faith unwavering!
 Lead us safe and guide us through;
 May our talk be always savouring
 Of thy word that's just and true,
 And the glory
 Be for ever to thy name.

K.

"THE LORD IS MY SHEPHERD; I SHALL NOT WANT."

Psalm xxxiii. 1.

My Shepherd is the Lord,
 He sees and knows my wants,
 According to his word,
 Supplies he daily grants;
 From what he's done I plainly see
 Goodness and mercy follow'd me.

Such mercy rich and free
 (That suits a beggar well)
 The Lord bestow'd on me,
 Though one deserving hell,
 And said for me he would provide
 While in the land I did reside.

"For, verily," he said,
 "Thou in the land shalt dwell,
 And surely shalt be fed."
 These words he me did tell,
 And at a time it happen'd right,
 For every help seem'd out of sight.

These words with power came
 Into my very heart,
 And, melting down my frame,
 The briny tear made start,
 And trickle down my cheeks apace,
 While in my heart then flow'd his grace.

My fretfulness was gone,
 And every fear and doubt,
 For what the Lord had done
 Had put them all to rout.
 Into his hands I then could fall,
 And unto him resign my all.

Bedworth, Warwickshire, Oct., 1842.

A workhouse seem'd my doom,
 I knew about the spot,
 For in it very soon
 I did expect my lot;
 For I was left, my wife was dead,
 With five young children to be fed.

This was my very case
 Before the promise came,
 I felt no inward peace,
 And murmur'd at the same,
 But when the promise came with power,
 God's will be done, I said that hour.

Behold! in sovereign grace
 For me he did appear,
 I did go to the place,
 But quick return'd from there,
 And all I ask'd was words to tell
 That Jesus had done all things well.

One year is almost up
 Since God his promise spake,
 And gave my soul to hope
 His word he would not break,
 Nor has his promise fail'd me yet,
 Though, shame to say, him I forget.

His promise he's not broke,
 Nor do I think he will,
 Because the pow'r that spoke
 Has pow'r it to fulfil.
 Sometimes I've thought that sink I must
 But O he makes me in him trust!

J. C.

THE GOSPEL STANDARD,

OR,

FEEBLE CHRISTIAN'S SUPPORT.

"Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness; for they shall be filled."—Matt. v. 6.

"Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began."—2 Tim. i. 9.

"The election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded."—Rom. xi. 7.

"If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest.—And they went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch; and he baptized him.—In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost."—Acts viii. 37, 38; Matt. xxviii. 19.

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VOL. IX.

A DIALOGUE BETWEEN JAMES AND SAMUEL.

(Concluded from page 69.)

J. I believe the Lord will teach his children that it is through much tribulation they must enter the kingdom of God. (Acts xiv. 22.) The Lord brings his children through the fire, and tries them as gold is tried, (Zec. xiii. 9.) and sits himself as a refiner and purifier of silver; (Mal. iii. 3;) and when for a season there is a need be that they should be in heaviness through manifold temptations, for the trial of their faith, they will to a certainty feel the heat of the fire and the force of temptation. (1 Pet. i. 6, 7.) Yet, bless the name of the dear Lord, they have their rejoicing seasons too; but their sorrows and their joys are felt realities, and when the blessed Spirit brings some sweet branch of the glorious truth of the blessed gospel with divine power to the conscience, and thereby delivers us out of some deep trial, or prepares us for one, we have a measure of the glory and blessedness of the glorious gospel of the blessed God, and in the end we are enabled to see and feel that all spiritual blessings flow to us from the everlasting electing love of God, in and through the person, blood, and obedience of the Lord Jesus Christ.

S. That is true, I am sure; for after I was blessed with a free and full salvation, I had true peace in my conscience. But I well remember being brought into a most dismal frame of mind, the awful workings of which I never can describe. The devil, and unbelief, and reason, yea, and conscience too, all appeared to witness against me; and I really was horror-struck in my feelings, and feared that I must sink into some dreadful crime and condemnation.

While thus at my wit's end, I cried aloud for the Lord to appear; but the enemy suggested that the Lord would hear me no more, and that I had so repeatedly insulted him that he had given me up for ever. I felt my poor soul sinking in the horrible pit and the miry clay, with scarce a gleam of light, except to behold the horrors of my cell, in which I was groaning and crying for mercy, help, and deliverance, for a considerable time, till I really concluded that the Lord had given me up, and entirely shut out my prayer, and that he would not hear me any more; when, lo! that blessed text came to my soul, by the power of the blessed Spirit, with such light, life, power, and glory, that I never shall totally forget it: "And shall not God avenge his own elect, which cry day and night unto him, though he bear long with them? I tell you that he will avenge them speedily. Nevertheless, when the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?" (Luke xviii. 7, 8.) This reached my case, raised me up out of the horrible pit, put a new song into my mouth, and I began to bless and praise the Lord for his everlasting, electing love. This blessed portion of scripture then came with equal power, "Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth. Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us. Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter. Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us." (Rom. viii. 33—37.) Every sentence told a sweet tale of electing love to my soul, and the blessed doctrine opened with such glory and beauty to my mind, that electing, discriminating love, in union with the glorious person, work, obedience, sufferings, death, resurrection, exaltation, and intercession of the Lord Jesus Christ filled my soul with indescribable joy; and let men say what they will, it was a feelingly blessed sealing time to my soul.

J. Then can any person dispute you out of eternal election?

S. They may out talk me, but they cannot make me give up that blessed truth which holds me so fast, nor make me forget what I then felt in my conscience. I have been brought to believe eternal, absolute, unconditional election by feeling necessity; yea, and in feeling glory too. I have in some sweet and solemn measure been made to feel the blessedness of being chosen in Christ, and of being made complete in him, and this, I have experienced, is "to the praise of the glory of his grace;" (Eph. i. 4—6;) and my soul has at times felt these realities with such power and glory, that I have been almost swallowed up in wonder and amazement.

J. This, my brother, is the way to get at the real blessedness of the truth, and whatever men may say against God's election, he will maintain it and reveal it in the hearts of his own people. "The election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded." Now, to me it appears that the whole world is composed of the election and the rest; and the elect of God shall, sooner or later, be brought feelingly

to say, "who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began." (2 Tim. i. 9.)

S. I believe it, my brother; for it is given unto the people of God "to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but unto others it is not given." (Matt. xiii. 11.) I have often been shocked to hear men boldly assert that the doctrines of election and predestination are damnable doctrines, and lead to all manner of licentiousness.

J. You may well be shocked, for if such men excel in anything, it is in having the infernal impudence of boldly giving God the lie; for thus saith the Lord: "According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love, having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, to the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the Beloved." (Eph. i. 4—6) Here the people of God are said to be chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world, not that they should be encouraged to live in sin, but that they should be holy and without blame before him in love; and also, that they are predestinated unto the adoption of sons by Jesus Christ to himself, and are made accepted in the Beloved. And again: "In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will;" (Eph. i. 11;) and this is "that we should be to the praise of God's glory." (i. 12.) Again; they "are predestinated to be conformed to the image of Christ." (Rom. viii. 29.) The living children of God are God's workmanship, "created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that they should walk in them." (Eph. ii. 10.) Now when conformity to the image of Christ, and being holy without blame before him in love, and walking in good works can be proved to be licentiousness, these glorious truths may be proved to have a licentious tendency; but till that can be proved, those who make such bold assertions must stand before God as daring, presumptuous liars against his solemn Majesty; but when they have done their best and worst to hold up these truths to contempt, they will have a place still in the word of God, and in the conscience of all who receive the truth in the love and power of it; and when the glorious doctrine of election has been sealed in the conscience by the power of God the Holy Ghost, it will appear, as it really is, a God-glorifying, sinner-humbling, and Christ-exalting holy doctrine; and those men who deny it must so far be infidels, for they deny the plain revealed will of God.

S. I believe such men shine in nothing more conspicuously than in their own self-righteousness, vain glory, and pride. But since the Lord so blessedly opened the glory of election to my mind, I have been solemnly and pleasingly amazed to find the word of God so full of it, and I really do wonder how any man professing to believe the Bible to be the word of God dares to deny it; and yet I have

heard some very talented men call it a damnable error, and declare that the Lord Jesus Christ never preached it.

J. When men are engaged in the service of Satan, the more talented they are, the more capable they are of doing their master's work; but to say that Christ never preached the doctrine of election, is like the rest of their flesh-pleasing, God-insulting statements. Now if we turn our attention to Luke iv. 16, we there find that the dear Lord began to read in the synagogue of Nazareth part of the 61st chapter of Isaiah, and having read, he closed the book and sat down, and he then said unto them, "This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears;" and the people appeared all attention, and wondered at the gracious words which proceeded out of his mouth. He knew their hearts, and he knew that the doctrine of discrimination would fill them with wrath and indignation; nevertheless, he preached it; as it is written: "But I tell you of a truth, many widows were in Israel in the days of Elias, when the heaven was shut up three years and six months, when great famine was throughout all the land; but unto none of them was Elias sent, save unto Sarepta, a city of Sidon, unto a woman that was a widow. And many lepers were in Israel in the time of Eliseus the prophet; and none of them was cleansed, saving Naaman the Syrian. And all they in the synagogue, when they heard these things, were filled with wrath, and rose up, and thrust him out of the city, and led him unto the brow of the hill whereon their city was built, that they might cast him down headlong." (Luke iv. 25—29.) Thus we find that this very pious congregation, which before appeared all attention, rose up in wrath, and led him to the brow of the hill whereon their city was built, that they might cast him down headlong. Now I have no doubt that thousands in our day who profess to be very pious would do just the same, had they the same opportunity; for the doctrine of God's discriminating grace is so humbling to the pride of man, that the stiff-necked, self-righteous, or, in other words, the self-pious, pharisee, cannot bear it; but when the Lord reveals this truth to the conscience of a sinner, it excludes boasting in self and of self, and says to the conscience, "Who made thee to differ from another; and what hast thou that thou didst not receive? Now if thou didst receive it, why dost thou glory, as if thou didst not receive it?" (1 Cor. iv. 7.) The glorious doctrine of election is one branch of the law of faith, which excludes boasting; (Rom. iii. 26, 27;) for in the great things of eternity, all creature boasting must be excluded, and the Lord alone exalted. I believe that were it not for a cursed principle of pride, which even lurks in the child of God himself, panting for creature honour, we should neither have nor require so much furnace work as we do; but the dear Lord is determined to try his people; and he takes a variety of methods in doing it, in order to withdraw them from their fleshly purposes, and to hide pride from them; and, bless his precious name, the whole of his dealings with them are in connection with his eternal, electing, discriminating love and grace; "For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth."



S. Yes, my friend, and such professors of religion who are without chastisement, whereof all God's people are partakers, are bastards, and not sons. True it is there are some men who profess to believe in electing grace, who give too much proof that they never received it in the love and power of it; therefore they can boast of their unshaken happiness, and look down with a degree of disdain upon God's poor, doubting, tempted, distressed, mourning children. There are men of talent, too, who can boldly preach the letter of the truth, and yet can vauntingly say to God's poor distressed and mourning children, "You must come up to me, for I cannot come down to you." But we find no such proud, swelling words either from Christ or his apostles. These boasters give too much room to fear that they have leaped into the doctrines of truth without their ever being brought with divine power to their conscience as suited to their condition.

J. Well, friend Samuel, I do not envy such men, nor wish to get up to them; for however high they may have climbed, and however incapable they may be of stooping to the case of the poor and needy mourners of God's family, I hope the dear Lord will never suffer me to meet them on their self-exalted summit. But when such men have spent all their presumptuous ammunition against God's poor broken down, rooted up, fearful, tried, and mourning children, God's word abounds with encouragement to them; and if, at your leisure, you will read the following portions, you will find both their case described, and encouragement given; so that God, in his blessed word, and at times by the unctuous power of his Spirit, comes down to their case: Ps. lxxii. 12; cii. 17—21; Isa. xxxv. 3—6; xli. 10—18; liv. 4—8; lxi. 1—3; Matt. xi. 28; Rom. xv. 1—5; 1 Cor. ix. 22; 2 Cor. i. 4; 1 Thes. v. 14; Heb. xii. 12, 13. But it is not necessary for me to multiply portions of scripture upon this subject, as the word of God abounds with them, and the God of the word will be graciously pleased to listen to the groans of the poor needy sinner who is of a contrite spirit, and who trembles at his word. (Isa. lxvi. 2.) Lofty, proud man may think himself too high to stop and come down to the state and case of the poor needy sinner, but the blessed Lord is nigh unto them that are of a broken heart, and saveth such as be of a contrite spirit. (Ps. xxxiv. 18.) Bless his precious name, he will hear their groaning, and spare them, and save them. (Ps. cii. 20; lxxii. 13.) "He giveth power to the faint, and to them that have no might he increaseth strength."

S. Thanks be to the Lord that it is so. Honours crown his brow, he delights to help those who appear to have no helper. But these self-exalted men can have no fellowship with those tried souls who are feelingly walking in the path described in the 38th Psalm, nor in the line of experience marked out in the first twenty verses of the third chapter of Lamentations. No doubt they would call it coming down to dung gate; but I have been there more than once, and, through the riches of God's grace, have found in the end the suitability and preciousness of the Lord Jesus Christ to such a burdened, troubled, bowed down, and loathsome wretch.

J. So have I, and I really do not regret it. But let us return to the solemn subject of God's discrimination. I think you said you had heard very talented men say that the Lord Jesus Christ never preached that doctrine; but, in addition to what we have already brought to prove that he did, let us turn to Matt. xi. 24—26, where it is written: "But I say unto you, that it shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom in the day of judgment than for thee. At that time Jesus answered and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes. Even so, Father; for so it seemed good in thy sight." Now, whoever are meant by the wise and the prudent, and whoever are meant by the babes, the Lord Jesus Christ thanks the Father for hiding the truth from the one and revealing it to the other, and his gracious Majesty resolves the whole into God's sovereign pleasure: "Even so, Father; for so it seemed good in thy sight." And again; "But ye believe not, because ye are not of my sheep, as I said unto you. My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me; and I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish; neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand." (John x. 26, 29.) Here we are told that some believed not because they were not his sheep; but his sheep heard his voice and were blessed with eternal life, and can never perish. And again: "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in nowise cast out." (John vi. 37.) Now these are solemn, absolute declarations. And further, the dear Lord says, "I pray for them; I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me, for they are thine. And all mine are thine, and thine are mine; and I am glorified in them." (John xvii. 9, 10.) Indeed, the whole chapter is full of discriminating love and grace, and it is the blessed will of Christ that all that the Father hath given him shall be with him, that they may behold his glory. There is a glorious oneness between Christ and his people, and the Father; as it is written: "Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word, that they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us, that the world may believe that thou hast sent me. And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them, that they may be one, even as we are one; I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one, that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me. Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me; for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world." (John xvii. 20—24.) "This people God has formed for himself, and they shall show forth his praise." (Isa. xliii. 21.)

S. Yes, and Peter dedicates his first epistle to God's elect people. But we need say no more upon this subject at present; it is a secret mine which runs through the whole volume of inspiration, and blessed is the man whom the dear Lord is pleased to bring to a spiri-

tual feeling of its contents. I have detained you much longer than I at first intended, but I hope you will excuse me.

J. There is no necessity for any apology; the conversation has been both sweet and profitable to my soul.

S. Well, brother, if it meets with your approbation, and the Lord spares us, I should like, at some future time, to have a little conversation upon some other branches of God's blessed truth.

J. With all my heart; but at the present farewell, and the peace of God rule in your heart.

S. Farewell, and may a divine unction rest upon your conscience.

W. G.

FELLOWSHIP OF THE SUFFERINGS OF CHRIST.

My dear afflicted Brother,—Your conflicts have been very sore and painful since I saw you,—a time never to be forgotten by you in this vale of sorrow. Many have been your changes and afflictions since I have known you; but the time is fast approaching when we shall enter into rest eternal, where sorrow and sighing shall for ever flee away. I am glad the Lord has given you a hope of your dear wife's eternal safety. O what a blessed change for sinners saved by grace to leave this wilderness for a paradise; this earthly house for the bosom of eternal love; the guilt of sin, the burden of self, and the thrusts of Satan, to enjoy, without a cloud between, the Father's loving smiles; to have rejoicing instead of weeping, light instead of darkness, praising instead of repining, and sweetly to magnify him instead of rebellion; to have carnal enmity utterly slain, the leprous house, with its rotten timbers and hollow strakes, entirely taken down, and the ransomed soul enter into eternal peace, where the voice of the Canaanite shall never be heard, nor any shaft from hell affright; where our sun shall never more go down, for there shall be no night there; for the Lamb, which is in the midst of the throne, shall feed us, and lead us to fountains of living waters, and God shall wipe all tears from our eyes. Then shall we heartily ascribe all the glory of our salvation to God and the Lamb. (We are sorry to hear Mrs. W— is so poorly; afflictions are her lot in this world, but she must join the throng above that shall no more say, "I am sick." If we did not need our Father's rod he would never use it. All his ways are wisdom, love, and faithfulness; and sometimes we can say, "Dear Father, still lead on." Mr. — is much better; we had some savoury talk respecting the foundation of our hope, and our hearts got warm toward one another.) You want to know how I got on at B—; and I know you will rejoice when I tell you that I was favoured with one of the most blessed visits from the Lord last Saturday night that ever my poor soul enjoyed. I felt in the evening a poor guilty empty fool; the thoughts of the Sabbath would crowd in, but I felt a poor restless wretch quite unfit to speak to the people. I took a solitary walk, in the course of which some feeling sighs were pressed from my

afflicted soul; and in about half an hour my mind was led out in sweet meditation respecting Jesus suffering the bitter pangs of wrath, being offered up a sacrifice instead of his church, and he sweetly and powerfully made it known to my poor soul that he loved me, and gave himself for me. O how my soul was melted in contrition, meekness, and godly sorrow at his dear feet! I grieved for grieving him; I looked by faith on him whom my sins had pierced, and mourned for him. Truly I had fellowship with him in his sufferings, and was almost dissolved in love and blood. I saw him roasted in the flame of wrath for me, a monster; bruised in agonies, sweat, and blood for me, a rebel; giving his back to the smiters and his cheeks to them that plucked off the hair; groaning in the garden, extended on the cross, shedding his precious blood; his righteous soul and his pure humanity held up by indwelling Deity till all the poisoned arrows, formed by the church's sin, spent their deadly venom on him, our precious Sacrifice, and fell powerless at our Conqueror's feet; and all this for me, the vilest sinner in or out of hell. How did I praise and magnify the sacred Three-in-One! I could not loathe sin enough, debase self enough, nor love and exalt my God enough. Confession flowed freely, and pardoning mercy, through his precious blood, flowed more freely still even to guilty me. The knife of holy indignation was put to the throat of all my carnal lusts; Esau was crucified and trampled under my feet, and Jacob's will was good enough to make a full end of him, and never more be pestered with his hellish din. As you might expect, I could glory in nothing in the pulpit but the cross of Christ, and speak of God's great compassion to great sinners, and how sweetly brands plucked from the jaws of deserved death could crown him Lord of all; and I do hope that many got a blessing.

My dear brother, we have partaken of each other's joys and sorrows; our souls were first knit together, and the joint oil flowed, when we were enabled to confess our faults and compare notes, walking from brother W—'s to G—, and we shall spend an eternity together. O what blessed employ to praise and magnify our God, who hath remembered us in our low estate, and whose mercy endureth for ever.—Believe me to remain your affectionate, though unworthy, brother,

Welwyn, June 22, 1838.

D. S.

TRUTH IN AMERICA.

The question is sometimes asked, "Is there any truth in America?"

As far as our information goes, we have every reason to believe that truth is very little known or preached in the United States; but we have received a sermon from that part of the world lately which has rather interested us, and of which we have, therefore, made copious extracts. Its author, Dr. Fræleigh, appears to have

been pastor of a Dutch congregation in New York, which is a branch of the Reformed Church in Holland. The sermon, however, which we now lay before our readers, was preached by him in English, he being a master of both languages, and not very long before his death, which took place only a few years ago.

THE EDITORS.

EXTRACTS FROM A SERMON BY DR. FRELIGH, LATE OF NEW YORK.

“And if thou take forth the precious from the vile, thou shalt be as my mouth.”—Jeremiah xv. 19.

The Prophet Jeremiah was hated by most of the people in the days of his ministry, because he faithfully reprov'd the abominations of Israel, denounced divine judgments against them, and contradicted the false prophets who favoured the people in their backsliding courses. He heard the word at the mouth of God, and warned the wicked at his command; but was hated, while the false prophets were applauded. Indeed, this is no uncommon thing. General applause and general hatred, in all ages of the world, have been the discriminating marks of the hireling and of the faithful servant of God. In this critical juncture Jeremiah betakes himself to prayer, and receives a gracious answer. His prayer begins with the fifteenth verse. (1.) He appeals to the omniscience of God for his innocence; “O Lord, thou knowest:” i. e., thou knowest I am innocent of the foul charges they bring against me, &c. (2.) He prays for the manifestation of God's goodness to himself. That he would “remember him”—his innocence, his faithfulness, the ill treatment he received from the people while in the discharge of his duty, &c.; that he would “visit him”—would not hide his face, or withhold his favour from him, but visit his distressed soul with salvation. (3.) He prays that the Lord would execute vengeance on his enemies, “and revenge me of my persecutors.” This petition is not to be viewed as repugnant to that spirit of forbearance and moderation which characterises true piety. A pious and faithful servant of God, engaged in his service, and meeting with violent opposition from the wicked, may and ought to pray that God would avenge himself on his own enemies; and to my knowledge, God hears such prayers. (4.) He prays that God would “not take him away;” i. e., not suffer him to be cut off by the violent hands of his enemies. (5.) To enforce his plea, he humbly reminds the Almighty, that it was for his sake he had suffered all this rebuke of his foes—“know that for thy sake I have suffered rebuke.” It is a glorious thing to suffer for God. The primitive Christians called such suffering *gloriosissima corona*, a most glorious crown!

In verses 16 and 17, he dwells on his general conduct and great delight in the words of God—“Thy words were found, and I did eat them; and thy word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of my heart: for I am called by thy name, O Lord God of hosts. I sat not in the assembly of the mockers, nor rejoiced; I sat alone because of thy hand; for thou hast filled me with indignation.”

In verse 18, he humbly expostulates with God—“Why is my pain perpetual, and my wound incurable, which refuseth to be healed? wilt thou be altogether unto me as a liar, and as waters that fail?”

To these fervent petitions of the prophet, we find God's gracious answer in the 19th and two following verses: "Therefore, thus saith the Lord," &c., out of which we have selected for our text, as descriptive of the work and character of a faithful minister of God, these words: "If thou take forth the precious from the vile, thou shalt be as my mouth." From which we propose to show,

I. How a faithful minister separates the precious from the vile.

II. That such a minister is God's mouth.

I. First, then, we are to show, "How a faithful minister separates the precious from the vile."

Precious and vile are relative terms, and apply both to persons and things. What God approves of and loves is *precious*. His faithful servants, his beloved saints, his covenant promises to them, their faith and other graces, their holy lives, their happy deaths—all are precious in the sight of the Lord. On the other hand, what God rejects and detests is called *vile*, whether persons or things. Precious and vile are the opposites of each other, and should never be confounded. In the ministrations of the sanctuary, God will have them accurately discriminated, or taken forth from each other. Among a number of things that mark the line of distinction between the faithful and true servant of God and the graceless hireling, an earnest and zealous endeavour in the former to point out the essential difference between true and false religion and religious professors, is the most conspicuous. In religion there are many false and disguised appearances, that come not up to that which is genuine. The hireling, who, like Ahimaaz, runs indeed with consent, but not with a commission, and runs along the plain, shunning the rough road, dwells on general doctrines. But the experienced preacher labours to point out the clear scriptural marks that discriminate truth from falsehood, and the genuine professor from the painted hypocrite. This is what God in our text calls "a taking forth of the precious from the vile," and this is the work of a faithful servant of Jesus Christ. I conceive it has reference (1.) to doctrines, and (2.) to persons.

A. In doctrine, *he* takes forth the precious from the vile, who separates truth from falsehood by defending the one, and refuting the other. Such a minister entertains sound notions of God, of his being, and of the manner of his being, three Persons in the Godhead; of his perfections and works; of man's fallen and wretched state by sin; of the free grace plan of salvation through Jesus Christ, the Son of God; of faith and the new birth; of a life of true holiness; and of genuine Christian experience, not acquired by speculation or hearsay, but wrought in the soul by the powerful agency of the Spirit of God. According to this description of a faithful teacher, a man may be considered as *orthodox* who is in fact a sort of *heretic*, namely, one who preaches the truth as far as he goes, but does not proceed far enough. Satan has filled his heart, and he keeps back part of the price that was paid for our redemption. A minister should preach the truth, nothing but the truth, and the whole truth.

1. To separate the precious from the vile implies that the essential doctrines of grace be clearly stated, ably defended, and powerfully

confirmed; that error, on the other hand, be exposed in all its hideous forms, its inconsistencies laid open to public view, and stripped of all its sophistical embellishments. The system of free grace should be explained in all its excellencies; its wonderful harmony with all the perfections of the Deity; its perfect adaptation to the sinful and miserable state of man by nature; its tendency to exalt God and to debase sinful and polluted man in the dust, for it ascribes all the glory of man's redemption to God, and makes every redeemed one a debtor to free and sovereign grace. On the other hand, the system of free will, the system of Arminian error must be painted in its blackest colours—as a system of delusion, at variance with God's sovereignty, quarrelling with all his attributes, and raising man above his Maker. This should be done with the utmost fortitude, and without ceasing.

2. To separate the precious from the vile also implies, that an accurate distinction be made between the labours of men who may belong to the same religious body, and have subscribed the same standards. And this, of the two I have mentioned, is the more difficult task; yet is it both necessary and useful. Nothing perhaps hath done more injury to the cause of the Redeemer than placing the labours of all ministers of the same church on an equal footing. Many there are who preach the truth, but not the whole of it. Having given satisfactory proofs of orthodoxy at a public examination, and consequently received the imposition of hands, does not constitute a gospel minister. A black coat may cover a black heart. The dry, insipid, spiritless discourses of such men stand as much in need of being discriminated from true evangelical, heart-felt, experimental preaching, as falsehood from orthodoxy. Placing the ministry of all ministers of the same church on a level, has been found productive of two great evils. It has served Satan as a cradle to lull asleep thousands of poor deluded souls; and it has been the occasion of holding up the few faithful ministers as wild fanatics, as men who were introducing innovations and affecting singularity.

To draw the line of discrimination is not so difficult as some have imagined. The substance delivered by graceless hirelings consists, not of heart-searching, heart-comforting truths, but chiefly of head-notions, which, like the waters of a standing pool in the midst of summer, are neither sweet nor clear to a gracious hearer. It requires a good deal of profound learning, flowery rhetoric, empty oratory, high-swelling words, and cunning craftiness, to decorate and set off such preaching. But these things do not feed the poor hungry, Christ-seeking soul. The faithful ministers of Christ, who act from a pure principle of heart-felt godliness, come forward without any artificial dress to adorn and recommend their sermons. They adopt the plainest and purest style, the sweet, modest, and beautiful simplicity of gospel language, the words and wisdom of the Holy Spirit. They aim at the edification of the people of God, and to instruct the meanest and weakest of the flock.

Graceless preaching is also known by its general tenor. It dwells chiefly on doctrinal points; and, if it sometimes venture into the pleasant garden of experience, it plucks weeds instead of flowers. Its

speech betrays it. Our Saviour, in looking over many of the sermons of our day, would reply as he did to the young ruler, "one thing thou lackest!" The language of Canaan is sometimes attempted, but they cannot say, "Shibboleth," for their lives—cannot describe the exercises of experimental godliness with any accuracy. All the knowledge they have of true godly experience, is derived from hearsay, from conversation, from books; not from any work of the Spirit of Christ in their own hearts. Their preaching is easily distinguished from the close heart-searching method of the true servants of Christ, who accurately describe the course of a Christian's experience, and can speak a word in season to babes, to the weak and doubting believer, to the heavy laden, to the tempted, to them that walk in darkness and have no light, as well as to them that are established, or have tasted of full assurance. Under such genuine preaching as this, an experienced Christian may sit and hear his own soul exclaiming, "Yes, that I have experienced—just so have I been wrought upon—that is what my soul has a long time thirsted for!"

It is easy to discriminate between the truly good and the openly ungodly. The openly wicked and profane make no pretensions to religion; they speak out their sins freely, like Sodom and Gomorrah; they drink in iniquity like water; they sin with a high hand, and are not ashamed. And yet, easy as this discrimination is, strange to tell, men are found who think that a life of worldly merriment and rough speaking can comport with true Christianity.

It is not difficult even to distinguish between the precious children of God and the bare nominal professor, the sober, sedate, well-versed and well-read Christian, who has laid up an extensive stock of orthodox scriptural knowledge, can defend the truth masterly, is strictly moral in his walk and conversation, is attentive to religious duties, such as prayer, social worship, charity to the poor, &c., but lacks the principle of a new life. These nominal professors are known by the following marks. [a.] In discoursing on religion and religious exercises, symptoms of pride and self-seeking will appear. [b.] His religious discourse will chiefly turn upon doctrinal points. He has evidently a reluctance to converse on heartfelt experience, and will contrive a thousand ways to evade it. Whereas, nothing affords a tenderly pious soul greater pleasure than to discourse with the people of God on the work of God in their souls. To this they invite the company of the godly: "Come and hear, all ye that fear God, and I will declare what he hath done for my soul. (Psa. lxxvi. 16.) [c.] The nominal professor cannot assent to the truths of experimental godliness, is no friend to experimental preaching or talking, and cannot assent to regeneration, unless it be a kind of his own framing. Of that wonderful change of heart and practice, which takes place in a man who is born again, he has no just idea. A true believer, on the contrary, cannot be satisfied with anything but sound experimental preaching. Preaching morality, preaching precision, preaching grammar, preaching the letter, is as death to God's people. And all conversation, where experience of the work of the Holy Spirit is not the sum and substance, is to them dry, tasteless, and unedifying.

(To be continued.)

A SECOND LETTER OF THE LATE MR. J. BROOK, OF BRIGHTON.

Dear Sir.—I have been much occupied of late. Mr. J.— has left me the care of his church these few weeks past, so that, including sermons to my own people, I have had to preach five times a week. This was nothing in apostolical times; but those times are long past, and when such will appear again I wot not, except at the close of time, when “the fulness of the Gentiles” shall come in, and “all Israel shall be saved.”

Certain enough it is, in my view, that there is little of the power of godliness among those who “name the name of Christ;” and, feeling as I do, I can hardly take up the first stone. I cannot but lament that the privileges of faith are deficient enough in those who certainly are in the truth of God. Both in Mr. J.’s and Mr. H.’s congregations, as well as in mine, there are few who “walk worthy of the vocation with which they are called.” It is their own loss.

I plainly perceive that the disciples were among those who felt the curse, bondage, and wrath of the law, and therefore attended John’s ministry, which went no further than “repentance towards God.” Hence “they came, and were baptized of him;” for this was the state of those whom John supposed to come to him in sincerity. Therefore, knowing the hypocrisy and confidence of the Pharisees, he met *them*, when they came to him, with this question: “Who hath warned *you* to flee from the wrath to come?” As if he had said, “What sense have *you* of your danger of utter destruction, and what desire have *you* for deliverance from it? You are resting still on your carnal descent from Abraham, and stand strong in your own confidence. (Matt. iii.) But the apostles had quitted this state, and had learned the character of that salvation and of that Saviour who must be their refuge. They had read the law and the prophets, and thus found out the way of escape; but had not obtained a knowledge or enjoyment of it. Therefore, “John stood, and two of his disciples; and, looking upon Jesus as he walked, he saith, Behold the Lamb of God!” They, upon this, followed Jesus, and abode with him that day. Here you may further discover the frame of these poor men. They were sensible sinners, lost, and hungry. The Saviour received them, and opened himself to them; and set himself forth as the end of the law, and the object of the prophets. They perceived that the agreement between the writings and the person were perfect; and therefore went and told other seeking sinners, “We have found the Messiah.” Others then met with him, and came to the same conclusion: “We have found him of whom Moses in the law and the prophets did write, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph.” “Thou art the King of Israel.”

Now, it is plain they had light enough to see where salvation lay; they were persuaded of it, and yet had not the enjoyment of it. And is not this your case? Do you not feel the wrath which the law reveals, and are you not a partaker of that repentance which

John preached? John's repentance and Christ's are very different, yet both are the effects of faith. The one springs from faith in God, the other from faith in Christ. John's repentance springs simply from faith in God, and consists in eschewing evil, and seeking peace. This faith lays hold on the righteousness, holiness, justice, and truth of God, and is attended with a deep sense of the nature and consequences of sin, and with great trouble and distress of soul. Our former course will then never do; the pleasures and enjoyments of this world lose their relish, and we turn towards something better, though we do not yet possess it. The scripture is fulfilled, "He that walketh righteously and speaketh uprightly; that despiseth the gains of oppression; that shutteth his hands from holding bribes; that stoppeth his ear from hearing blood, and shutteth his eye from seeing evil; he shall dwell on high; his place of defence shall be the munition of rocks. Bread shall be given him; his waters shall be sure." Here you discover something present, and something to come. The present is faith in and repentance towards God; the future is faith in and repentance towards Christ. You may ask, "What is the difference?" Faith in God, in my apprehension and experience, brings death; faith in Christ, life. Repentance towards God is accompanied with, or rather is, a turning from our evil ways. Repentance in Christ Jesus is accompanied with self denunciations, and a self-loathing brokenness of heart, through a sense of his sufferings. This distinction between faith in God and faith in Christ, the Saviour himself has laid down: "Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid. Ye believe in God, believe also in me." He exhorts them to faith in himself as the Mediator, through which these things would be received in their hearts. The disciples were some time in this state. They forsook all and followed Christ, but they did not get much by it at first. "We have," said they, "forsaken all and followed thee. What shall we have therefore?" This does not look much like satisfaction or enjoyment.

Now you will find it hard work to feel that you have any fear of God, of death, and of judgment; that you have trouble of soul, anguish of spirit, and bitterness of soul; that, in the gospel sense, you are peevish, fretful, and repining in bondage, hardness of heart, and impenitency; and yet that you nevertheless turn your back on the pleasures of this world, and hear the voice of direction to the Lamb of God, and trace him out, and are persuaded that he is the Messiah, or Anointed One, above his fellows, for the salvation of their souls. As yet you have more faith in God than in him, and this faith kills you. You are persuaded that God must visit your transgressions somewhere, either in yourself or in the Surety. You have not faith enough in the last to conclude that he has done it, and therefore your flesh "trembleth for fear of him, and you are afraid of his judgments." You are confused and bewildered in darkness, yet have light enough to see where the light is, and life enough to desire it for yourself. "You hath he quickened, who were once dead in trespasses and sins," and you therefore feel your death,

which you never did before. Now, if you feel death, you feel coldness, inability, and corruption. This accounts for all your complaints. Death felt, and life imparted, will solve the riddle sooner or later, and you shall confess it.

I have brought the apostles no further yet. They are gone to their old trade again, till Jesus shall pass by and call them to follow him. Yet his name is the desire of their souls, and therefore when they hear his voice they forsake all and follow him. This shall be the subject of my next letter.

That God may direct "a word in season" is the prayer of yours affectionately,

Brighton, Oct. 4, 1803.

W. J. BROOK.

"I WILL SING OF MERCY AND JUDGMENT."

Dear Messrs. Editors,—I was born in sin and lived a slave to Satan till it pleased God, who commanded his light to shine out of darkness, to shine with supernatural light and life into my soul, and bring me to know Him, whom to know is life eternal. My conscience was very much alarmed, when very young, at the thoughts of eternity, for I knew that I was the subject of sin, and as such I thought I must for ever perish; and when the judgment day occurred to my mind, and the thought that all my sins would then be exposed to God and man, it has made me shudder, and wish that I had never been born; but, being the offspring of God-fearing parents, I was kept from many outward acts of vice which my wicked heart would have led me into had I not been held by them with a tight hand. Having arrived at the age of sixteen, I left home, and soon after formed an acquaintance with a young man about my own age, and he, being in a great measure given up to profanity, was frequently the mean of drawing me, on a Sabbath day, to follow his steps in those pleasures in which he delighted; but I found them to burden my conscience, for in such pursuits my parents would not allow me to indulge while under their care, and although I knew that I was breaking the Sabbath day and sinning against God, yet I found the temptations of my companion to be so great that I could not help following his wicked example. About this time I was asked to become a teacher in a Sunday school, to which I consented, hoping it might be the means of weaning me from his company, but I soon found that I had not accomplished what I wanted, for he argued that I might go and look after the children till the service commenced, and then, leaving them to the care of the other teachers, join him in some idle pursuit, or spend the afternoon at the alehouse, to which, to my shame and the wounding of my conscience, I too frequently consented, and how to deliver myself from such I knew not. At length I prayed to the Lord to deliver me from that wicked companion of mine, and almost immediately after he met with an accident which was the cause of his being conveyed to his home, which was at a distance; and, although he soon recovered his health and strength, he did not again return to the place where I was. Having

therefore had such a conspicuous answer to prayer, it encouraged me to seek the Lord's face; so I now kept close to chapel, and thought I was getting very religious. Things went on very comfortably till about the month of March in the following year, when all of a sudden my sins from my childhood were brought before my eyes, and I felt that if I lived and died in that state I should never enter the kingdom of God, but be for ever lost. It then occurred to my mind that there was a law given by Moses which I thought I was able to keep, and vainly imagined that I should soon make things straight between God and my conscience. Accordingly, the first opportunity that offered, I repaired to my closet for prayer, and determined to break off all outward acts of foolish talking; but, alas! alas! I soon found my resolution to be vain, for, instead of getting better, I got worse and worse, and all my before supposed comeliness was turned into corruption. The least idle word that dropped from my lips seemed to pierce me like a dagger, and oftentimes when I attempted to pray I could not utter a word, but poured out my heart, in some measure, in sighs and groans that could not be uttered. When I could open my mouth, my prayer consisted chiefly of these two passages of scripture, "God be merciful to me a sinner!" "Lord, what must I do to be saved?" but notwithstanding all this I could find no access to God; indeed I knew not how God could be just and yet have mercy upon such a vile wretch, for day after day fresh sins were brought to view, by which I was made sensible that from the crown of my head to the soles of my feet there was no soundness. Almost every minute of the day I was breathing out my heart to the Lord, for there was none other to whom I could look for help, but I seemed to look in vain.

About this time I had a dream which very much troubled me. I dreamed that I saw a very fine palace, and in this palace there lived a gentleman who could tell who the elect were; so I and another went to him to see if we were elected. When we arrived at the palace we saw a very grave-looking gentleman, and the person that was with me stepped up to him, and asked if he was one of the elect. He took hold of his hand, looked at it, and, turning away, told him that he was not. I then went to him, and, also turning away, he told me the same. I cried after him, but he would not stop to lend an ear. All this did not drive me from the Lord, but, if possible, caused me to stick closer to him. I continued in this miserable frame of mind till May, getting no better, but rather worse. I was, to my feelings, on the very brink of hell, that being what I justly deserved, and if the Lord had let loose his hand, thereby cutting me off and banishing me from his presence, I could not but have justified him in the deed, for I felt myself to be altogether as an unclean thing, and as such I was brought to cast myself at his feet, saying, "If I perish, I will perish here." Never shall I forget the 5th of May. On the evening of that day I went about two miles to hear a person preach, but before I started I went to my closet and begged of the Lord, if it were his will, that I might that night find mercy. I walked the two miles alone, and the whole of the way my soul appeared to be in

agony. If ever I wrestled with the Lord it was then, for I thought that before long hell would be my doom. O how my soul did cry out, "What must I do to be saved?" When I arrived at the place, the service had commenced, but I could pay no regard to what was going on, for while the minister was preaching my soul was saying, "God be merciful to me a sinner!" "Lord, what must I do to be saved?" "Save, Lord, or I perish." In an instant I was brought from the verge of hell into heaven itself, by these words sounding into my very soul, "Without me ye can do nothing." The sins which before so pressed me down were all gone. When I looked for them I could not find them. There was no guilt left upon my conscience, and as I could not before lend an ear to the minister from the anguish of spirit I felt, neither could I now for the joy, praise, love, and thanksgiving that I felt. Tears of love and gratitude flowed down my cheeks, while all the powers of my soul were drawn forth in extolling that Jesus who had put away my sins by the sacrifice of himself, and given me the earnest of heaven in my own bosom. O how I longed for the service to be over, that I might tell a friend of mine who was there what great things the Lord had done for my soul. I could then feelingly join the Psalmist, and say, "Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me, bless his holy name," for he had healed all my diseases and crowned me with loving-kindness and tender mercies. When the service was ended, I told my friend what great things the Lord had done for me. He heard me very patiently, and when I had done he said to me that I had not yet got out of the reach of the gunshot of the devil. I could not believe what he told me, for I thought I was going to have a smooth path all the way to heaven, not having any more sins to terrify me, or the devil to plague me. O what a blessed journey I had home that night, for it appeared to me as if the heavens were opened and I could see the Lord Jesus in glory, as my Lord! I did not see this with my natural eyes, but with the eye of faith, and I went on praising and blessing the Lord. O happy moment! never-to-be-forgotten spot! O that it were with me now as it was then; but, alas! alas! I have frequently to go mourning without the light of the Sun of Righteousness, and feel myself to be a brother to dragons and a companion to owls. My wicked heart shows itself in so many hideous forms that it makes me exclaim, "Can ever God dwell here?"

I returned home that (Tuesday) night in peace, and every thing seemed to wear a fresh aspect. I reposed myself upon my bed with the same sweet frame of mind, and it continued with me all Wednesday, but on Thursday it began gradually to decline, for the enemy kept harassing me and telling me that I was deceived. On the Friday my soul was very much cast down and burdened; praise was taken away, and I really began to think that I was deceived, for no access could I find to the throne of grace. On the Saturday I seemed to be sunk much lower than ever, being filled with despair, and ready to give up all as lost; but that evening I had to go out of town, and as I was walking along, pouring out my heart unto the Lord, these words occurred to my mind, "Come unto me, all ye that labour and

are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." I uttered a part of them, but they came home with such power that they caused me to stop, and I said to myself, "Surely it must mean those that are labouring under a feeling sense of sin and guilt;" and it was as if some one said, "Yes; you are the character." With this faith was communicated, and I could now come unto the Lord Jesus, and in him find rest. My sins were all carried to the land of forgetfulness, for when I sought for them I could not find them, and my soul was filled with love, joy, praise, and adoration. Then I could join with Mary in my soul's feeling, and wash the feet of Jesus with my tears, and wipe them with the hairs of my head. O sweet peace! heavenly tranquillity! O that I could for ever praise the Lord for his good and wonderful works to me, who am, in feeling, the vilest of the vile! This blessed peace of mind lasted for some little time, and whilst I was walking under the smiles of my God, all was well. I found a pleasure in reading the Bible; it was full of marrow and fatness, and was the joy and rejoicing of my heart. I also found a pleasure in attending upon the word preached, for it generally contained a blessing, and dropped wet with the dew of heaven. In the course of a little time darkness again began to veil my sky; but although the Lord withdrew his manifestive presence, I was not so much sunk in mind as I had been before; and as I had proved the Lord to be a God who heareth and answereth prayer, I said to myself, "I will go and pour out my heart to the Lord, and perhaps he will bring home some portion of his word and set my soul at liberty." But, alas! I was much disappointed, for the heavens appeared as iron and the earth as brass. My prayers all fell to the ground. Prayer was quite a task, and, instead of leaving my burden with the Lord, I was obliged to carry it till the set time to favour my soul arrived, and I found then, and have ever found since, that the Lord never delivers my soul till he has brought me to join feelingly with Peter when he said, "Save, Lord, or I perish!" When all my strength was gone, and there was none shut up, or left, he delivered me by reading Bunyan's "Come and Welcome." During the summer my soul was very much favoured with the presence of the Lord. I have known what it was to walk for weeks together, and commune with him as a man communes with his friend; and though I was scoffed at by the world, and placed in the midst of temptations, yet could I turn my back upon the whole, for I felt as if I would rather suffer affliction with the children of God than enjoy the pleasures of sin. Still I found it to be as the poet says,

"But grace, though the smallest,
Shall surely be tried."

I again sunk into a very indifferent frame of mind, and seemed to be destitute of all feeling. The enemy sorely harassed me, telling me that I was deceived, which caused me to think that such was really the case, for I had not before been brought into so dreadful a state of mind. I told the Lord that if he would once more appear for me, and manifest himself as mine, I would not doubt his love and faithfulness any more. Very shortly after this the Lord broke

in upon my soul, and the weight of glory was so great that I could scarcely bear up under it. I could now see that he who had begun the work in me would carry it on, and I was enabled to sing out, "Not unto me, not unto me, but unto thy name be all the glory!" In the course of a little time all this wore off, and then came the trial as to whether I would doubt the Lord's faithfulness or not, and it was of such a nature as I had not before experienced, for one night as I was going to see a friend of mine who was near his latter end, the devil met me, not, I mean, in a bodily shape, and told me to pray for the restoration of my friend, adding, "The Lord hath said that whatsoever ye ask in his name he will do it, that the Father may be glorified in the Son." Many other passages of scripture he mixed up to persuade me that the Lord would restore my friend to health if I prayed for it; therefore, not knowing that these suggestions came from the enemy, I began to pray to the Lord to spare his life, but as soon as I began, the enemy brought passage after passage from the Scriptures to cause me to believe that the Lord would not answer my petition; and when he saw that I believed it was from the Lord, and that he would answer it, he turned himself round and told me that it was not likely that my friend could be restored, for he was in a consumption, and death would soon put an end to his existence. In this way was I harassed for two or three months, but was still firmly persuaded in my own mind that he would get better, and frequently spoke of it to many, although he continued to get worse. Some said that if ever he did recover, a miracle must be wrought upon him. To this I said that a miracle would be wrought upon him. The faith I had that he would again get well removed all mountains that came in the way, but it never softened my heart nor laid me low at the feet of Jesus, but filled me with pride to think that such a wonderful revelation should be made to me. Thus I went on till a day or two before the death of my friend, and seeing him labour so hard for breath, I was compelled to pray to the Lord to take him out of his sufferings, which he did shortly after, to the confusion of my pride and conceit. Nothing particular occurred until the day on which I was returning from his funeral, but on my arrival at the place where I first began to pray that his life might be spared the devil stopped me, and sounded these words into my ear like thunder; "There is no God. If there is, he is not your God. You thought he had heard and answered your prayers. Where are your prayers now?" O I shall never forget the spot and the feelings produced! I verily thought that there was an end put to my religion now, for such darkness seized my mind, and such horrid thoughts filled my soul, that I felt at times as if I could pull God from his throne, and I think that for about twelve or fifteen months after this I walked without the smallest glimpse of light. I could find no one that was plagued as I was, and I could not find that any minister hinted about the same exercise until the Lord again appeared for me. O the miserable days that I had whilst thus shut out from the presence of the Lord! The first token of manifested mercy that I received was one day as I was walking in the fields with a heavy heart, my soul cast down, and

pouring out my soul to the Lord, for I still could not give up prayer, although I had so long apparently sought in vain. My soul was wrestling with the Lord, but I could not find that he lent an ear to my supplications, for the heavens appeared like brass. At the conclusion of my prayer I made use of the following words: "O Lord, I would desire to drop into thine hands," and in a moment faith entered my heart, by which I was enabled to roll my burden upon the Lord. I rejoiced at the happy release, and my soul once more broke forth in the language that I had long been a stranger to, namely, in blessing the Lord Jesus for the great love wherewith he had loved one that was deserving of the lowest hell. O this was indeed a blessed release, and my soul once more joined in the dances of those that make merry. The visitation was but short, for the Lord soon left off communing with me, and I, like Abraham, returned to my own place, a place of darkness, and there the enemy of my soul often tried to persuade me that my religion was not of the right stamp; but when the Spirit of the Lord bore witness to my spirit that I was a child of God, it mattered not what the enemy said, or what the world said, for my faith stood not in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God. One day as I was poring over my miserable state, these words entered my mind without any particular degree of power: "Christ in the heart the hope of glory," which led me to search in order to see what was my hope, and I came to the conclusion that Christ was my hope, my only hope, and that I was a naked sinner hanging upon him without one good thought, word, or action. This for a few moments raised my soul above the world, self, and sin, and enabled me to hold communion with the Lord, but still I find that many days of darkness abide with me, and if it was not for the lifts that I have by the way I believe that I should sink in despair. Some little time after this, as I was reading a sermon by Mr. G—, "The Glory of God's Grace," the contents of it so entered into my soul, and described the exercises with which I was exercised, that it softened my heart and drew forth my soul in praise and adoration to God; but no sooner did I begin to read again than the devil told me that my feelings were all fleshly, and that God was not the author of them. If they are fleshly feelings, or if they are not, they are such as I can very seldom realize. In a few months after this I was beset by a very strong temptation, and so powerfully did it work that I thought I should really bring a disgrace upon the cause of God. Oftentimes I could not offer a prayer against it, but thought that I would run into it let the consequences be what they might. Then again it would abate a little, and I found a spirit of prayer to wrestle with the Lord against it, feeling confident that he would make a way for my escape. Whilst I was thus cast down, these words were brought to my mind, "Growing in grace and in a knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ," and this was opened to my understanding, that I was enabled to see that grace was free favour, and that I grew in it, which was manifested to my soul when I felt that I deserved nothing but hell; therefore the snare having been broken, my soul was set at liberty.

I must now conclude or I shall be intruding, but there are many other instances that I might name of the Lord having made bare his arm and delivered my soul when none else but himself could deliver; yea, he hath been better to me than my many fears, and told me that "goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, and I shall dwell in the house of the Lord for ever." O that I had a heart to praise him! but alas! alas! I often feel as destitute of love and praise as the brute creation, and sensibly feel that I can only work out that which is well pleasing in his sight as he works in me both to will and to do.—Yours in Christian affection,

Witham, Essex, Oct. 4, 1842.

DYING TESTIMONY OF MARTHA FLACK.

Martha Flack, the subject of the following lines, was ignorant of even the outward form of religion, and, like the whole of Adam's posterity, she went astray from the womb, speaking lies; and though greatly afflicted in body, she showed no concern for her immortal soul until a few weeks before her death. But, bless the Lord, he knows them that are his, and he will bring them to know their spiritual need of the Lamb; he will give them a feeling sense of their sinfulness, their want of righteousness, and of the truth of the judgment to come.

When poor Martha was laid on a bed of affliction, a friend who knew the Lord went to see her, to whom she told the distress of her soul. She said to him, "O my sins lie with a great weight upon my mind! O that some one would come and pray with me! I do try to beg in my poor way; but O, shall I ever find mercy?" Another person was asked to go and see her, and upon seeing him she said, "O what a sinner I am! My sins lie as a heavy burden upon my mind, and I have no hope." I said, "Perhaps you will get better, and then no doubt you will be very good." This I said to see whether it was merely natural conviction. She said, "I fear that I should be worse, if possible." "But," I asked, "do you not want to see your old companions?" She answered, "I want to see none, unless they talk about the Lord." "But you *did* like to see them," I said. "Yes, but I did not know then that there was a God." I said, "Then you do now?" She answered, "Yes;" and here the tears rolled down her cheeks, as she exclaimed, "O my sins!" On seeing this, I spoke of our state by nature and practice, of the necessity of vital religion, which every poor sinner feels when God the Holy Spirit opens his eyes, and of the freeness of mercy to every sin-burdened soul.

On my visiting her a second time, I found her in great distress; and, still in much sorrow, she said, "O that God would give me repentance!" I then spoke of Christ, who was "exalted to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins;" and O with what eagerness did she listen to those truths which exalt the Saviour, and abase the sensible sinner! I read the hymn commencing,

"Rock of Ages, shelter me;"

and also the one,

"Father, at thy command I come."

I then spoke of Christ bearing the curse and fulfilling the law, and of the righteousness which he had wrought out, and which God the Father places to the account of the sinner, God the Holy Ghost applying it to the conscience of every poor soul whom he is pleased to favour with a feeling sense of his nakedness. At this moment her soul appeared full of joy, and she

"Wept to the praise of the mercy she'd found."

The next time I visited her, she told me that she had had a precious view of the Lord Jesus. But after this Satan was permitted to distress her. She said that Satan told her she must not beg, but, she added, "I tell him that I must." At another time, she was distressed on account of darkness and dreadful suggestions; but the dear Lord again visited her with his sovereign kindness. At one time a person said to her, "What a mercy that you have found the Lord!" to which she replied, "The Lord found me, and he found me on this bed, or I should never have known him." She was not able to speak much, as she had great difficulty in breathing.

At another time when I called to see her, she appeared as if she would soon be gone, but she was quite happy. I asked her how she expected to go to heaven, to which she replied, with great energy, "By the blood and righteousness of Christ." She said to her father, "You have been a good father to me, but I have a better Father to go to."

The last time I visited her she was labouring hard for breath. I said, "Are you still happy?" She answered, "Yes." I asked, "Is Jesus still precious?" She replied, "He is." I observed, "It is hard work." She said, "I can bear it." "Then Jesus still supports?" said I. She answered, "He does. This is nothing to what I deserve."

On Thursday she could hardly speak; and from five o'clock in the afternoon until eleven at night, she did not speak. We thought that she would never speak any more; but, ere she departed, she made a great struggle to speak. At last she burst forth, and said, "Thanks be to God, I have overcome Satan. I am clothed with a long white robe. I fear not Satan nor sin, death nor hell." She waved her hand in triumph. It fell; and, in a few moments, her soul took its flight to its Father and its God, there to sing the song of all the ransomed tribes, "Unto Him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood."

"O'er heaven's gate a motto stands engraved,

'Let sin alone be damn'd, but sinners saved;'

And o'er the gate of hell's dark dismal cave,

'Jesus the purchase of his blood will have.'—KENT.

Cambridgeshire.

R. P. L.

Mark the language of the apostle. "He called me," saith he. How? Was it for my pharisaical religion, or for my blameless and holy life? For my prayers, fastings, and works? No. Much less then for my blasphemies, persecutions, oppressions. How then? By his mere grace alone.—*Luther*.

EDITORS' REVIEW.

The Sealing of the Spirit: being the substance of a Sermon from Ephesians i. 13, 14, preached at Trinity Chapel, Alfred-street, Leicester, Sept. 4, 1842. By John M'Kenzie.—Gadsby, Manchester; Groombridge, London. Price 2d.

The Bible is the grand reservoir of divine and revealed truth; and all who have ever spoken or written to any purpose on eternal realities have been taught out of the Scriptures by God the Holy Ghost. But out of this storehouse so amply provided, out of this armoury so richly furnished, men of truth, at different periods and in different ages, have drawn supplies, and have been equipped with weapons precisely adapted to the state of the Church of God at the time they severally were raised up. To illustrate our meaning by examples. When Arianism threatened to overwhelm the Church, Athanasius was raised up to defend the doctrine of the Trinity; when the Church lay prostrate and paralysed under Romish superstitions, Luther was sent forth to proclaim the glorious truths connected with justification; when formality and self-righteousness well nigh universally prevailed, Whitfield, in the last century, was sent to preach everywhere the almost forgotten doctrine of the new birth; and when the law of Moses was laid on the neck of the disciples, Huntington was called from the coal barge to proclaim aloud, "Stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage." But whence did these men of God derive their weapons, which were made mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds? Was it not from the Scriptures that their own souls were taught the truths that they proclaimed, and which were so signally blest to elect vessels of mercy.

The state of the Church in our day differs from any of its preceding states. It has always been so. The Church has gone through successive changes, and, like the moon, (to which she is compared, Song vi. 10, Rev. xii. 1,) has presented different phases at different periods. The ministers, therefore, and writers that were suited to their day would not be equally suited to ours. Fresh errors arising require fresh detection; and that ministry is alone suitable to the wants and exigencies of the Church, which boldly and faithfully withstands such errors, and brings forth such truths as are antidotes to such poisons. It is because we are impressed with these feelings that we are continually (pettishly, perhaps, it may appear to some) censoring works which contain truth, simply because it is truth unsuitable to present circumstances and exigencies. A dead Calvinistic profession has much overspread the Church; and therefore mere Calvinism, dry, barren, carnal Calvinism, is only fostering an evil already too prevalent. This heavy and sleepy nurse has well nigh overlaid the child; and, therefore, instead of praising her for her care of the infant, we would rather pay her her wages, and send her about her business.

God, it appears to us, who is never unmindful of his purchased flock, has been for some time past raising up men who see the present

state of the Church, and boldly and faithfully testify against it. Nor is their testimony, as witnesses for God, (Isa. xliii. 10, Rev. xi. 3,) confined merely to testifying *against* all the abominations committed in Israel, but they testify also *for* the comfort and edification of the people of God, by being led into that path of experience, and tracing out those footsteps in which the flock are, for the most part, led in this dark and cloudy day. It is here that the false prophets are manifested. They say, Peace, peace! when there is no peace. "Go up to Ramoth-Gilead," is their cry, "for the Lord shall deliver it into thy hand." (1 Kings xxii. 12.) Thus they build up bold, presumptuous professors on the one hand, and distress the living family on the other, strengthening the hands of the wicked, and making the hearts of the righteous sad.

It rejoices us, then, to see men raised up, armed and equipped for the present times; men in whom a hollow profession has been laid bare and broken down; men who have passed under the rod, and whose religion has been traced line by line in their consciences by the finger of the Holy Ghost; men in whom the spiritual eye at once recognizes the peculiar stamp of Heaven's own mint, the inimitable, though not unattempted, credentials of the ambassadors of Christ. And we gladly hail the author of the above sermon as one of these instruments, these "sharp threshing instruments having teeth," as one of these repairers of the breach, of these restorers of the paths to dwell in. We say it without flattery, in the same spirit of sincerity and truth in which we often censure, that it is one of the best sermons, and we believe we might say the best, that we have read for a long time. It is no common-place discourse, neatly divided and accurately subdivided, as smooth as oil, and as elegant as those finical dissenting dandies in their gown and bands and gold rings, who call themselves Reverend ministers. No; if there be any fault in its style, and we do not mean to call it such, it is that it is in places rough and homely. But its chief recommendation, to our mind, is that it is pointed, searching, and discriminating. Truth is not here put under a bushel, but placed on a candlestick; the sword is not buried in an elegantly adorned scabbard, but drawn forth sharp and two-edged; and the word of God is brought forth, not, as some one advised a young minister, to adorn and beautify the discourse, but to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow.

It is, as it were, an accurate and nicely traced out map of a Christian's path; and it has this great value, that it has mapped out very clearly a track of Christian experience not much nor usually pointed out. There is a way of preaching experience, which from its vagueness and looseness has little or no weight and savour attending it. Such preaching and writing may be compared to a school-map of England. Such a map may give a general idea of the shape of the country, and may contain, perhaps, every county and county-town. But for all practical purposes it is utterly useless. The sailor could not by it steer his ship up the Channel; the foreigner could not with it find his way from place to place by land. It is not sufficiently minute and particular for any practical purpose. So spiritually.

Minuteness and particularity are essential to experimental preaching and writing. To revert to our figure. An experimental sermon should resemble an Ordnance, or rather what is called, a military map. The hills, the valleys, the defiles, the fords, the bridges, the woods, the marshes, the roads, the situations for attack or defence, should all be traced out distinctly and accurately. Herein consists the beauty and blessedness of Bunyan's Pilgrim, of the works of the immortal Coal-heaver, and of Hart's Hymns. These are not wrapped up in vague generalities and stale common-places, but are all vivid descriptions and delineations of *particular* experiences, descending with blessed minuteness into all the ups and downs, ins and outs, sinkings and risings of living souls. Thus, the author of the sermon which we are now reviewing has not heaped together a mass of words about experience, and, dipping into his Bible and hymn book, brought out certain set phrases and current terms—a device of some doctrinal ministers to make their people believe they are experimental preachers. No; it is real, sound, genuine experience; and that too not culled from Huntington and other authors, but brought forth from the treasure of a good and honest heart.

But it is time to favour our readers with some extracts, and not have all the talk to ourselves. We think we cannot do better than quote the very beginning, for there is no long historical introduction, but an immediate plunging into the very marrow of his subject:

"In speaking from these words as the Lord shall enable me, it is my intention to confine my remarks chiefly to two particulars, viz., *believing*, and *sealing*: "After that ye believed, ye were sealed."

"I. I shall endeavour to speak a little on believing.

"II. On sealing.

"I. Believing. While there is but one true and genuine faith, (Eph. iv. 5,) which ends in the salvation of the soul, (1 Pet. i. 9,) which is a grace-covenant blessing (Eph. i. 3,) and a fruit of the Spirit, (Gal. v. 22,) yet the Scriptures speak of several kinds of faith; false and true faith, natural and spiritual faith, dead and living faith; faith which gives up the conflict, and faith which endures to the end; faith which can be shipwrecked, (1 Tim. i. 19,) and faith which standeth the fiery trial, (1 Pet. i. 7,) lives in floods, (Isa. xliii. 2,) and is rooted and grounded in love; (Eph. iii. 17;) faith which can be overthrown, (2 Tim. ii. 18,) and faith which overcometh the world; (1 John v. 4;) the faith of miracles, (1 Cor. xiii. 2,) and the faith of devils. (James ii. 19.) And it is solemnly awful to see to what great lengths the former can go, and how very near in some cases it can approach in likeness to the latter, and how many are deceived by it. Can spiritual faith select a sacrifice and offer it to God? so can natural faith. (Gen. iv. 3, 4.) Does faith in the Spirit "worship God in spirit and in truth?" letter faith can "draw nigh unto him with the mouth, and honour him with the lips." (Isa. xxix. 13; Matt. xv. 8, 9.) Does true faith "rejoice in the truth," and receive it in the love of it? false faith can "receive the word with joy," but when touched with trials withers and dies. Does living faith draw the sap of life from the true vine into the branches? natural faith professes to do the same. (John xv. 1—6.) Does gracious faith move the heart with fear, and receive the word of God with trembling? (Heb. xi. 7; Ezra ix. 4;) "the devils also believe and tremble." (James ii. 19.) Does true faith believe in the one only and true God? (1 Cor. viii. 4—6;) dead faith believes this also: "Thou believest there is one God." (James ii. 19.) Does living faith bring forth fruits of righteousness? dead faith has a kind of fruit also, "whose fruit withereth," "and who bring no fruit to perfection." Does divine faith "purify unto God a peculiar people, zealous of good works?"

natural faith can also "escape the pollutions of the world" for a season, and sweep and garnish the house, but in the hour of temptation return again to its vomit and the mire. (2 Pet. ii. 20—22; Luke xi. 25.) Does gracious faith restore four-fold for all ill-gotten gain, and give the half of the residue to the poor? (Luke xix. 8;) natural faith can give up part of its own lawful property to the cause of truth, but with the other part lie to the Holy Ghost. (Acts v. 1—5.) Does sincere faith in the heart salute the brethren from spiritual union to them in the truth? (1 Cor. xvi. 21—24; Col. iv. 14, 15;) feigned faith can also salute them: "There salute thee Epaphras;" "*Demas* hath forsaken me, having loved this present world." (Philemon 23, 24; 2 Tim. iv. 10.) Does true faith believe and practise baptism? so does natural faith. "Simon believed also, and was baptized." Does true faith join to the church as a visible member? (Acts ii. 41, 42;) so does false faith: "There are certain men crept in unawares;" "False brethren unawares brought in, who came in privily to spy out our liberty which we have in Jesus Christ;" "After my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock;" "Also of your own-selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things." Thus we see that false faith can travel step by step with true faith in all the externals of religion, and in many apparent internal things too. So long may persons go on in a profession of religion, and so near may they approach to the truth, that time only will manifest the cheat to themselves and others. True, indeed, it is, that "many are called, (into a profession,) but few are chosen," or accepted of God. The devil, dead ministers, and blind zeal call many, and many call themselves; but however deceived and deceiving graceless professors may pass here as genuine, at the last grand day, when the Lord shall be revealed, "coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory," he will separate the precious from the vile, the chaff from the wheat, and divide the goats from the sheep, and give to every man according to that which shall be found in his heart, (1 Kings viii. 39,) "even to give to every man according to his ways, and according to the fruit of his doings." (Jer. xvii. 10.) He will reward sin with the wages of death, tribulation, and anguish; but his own grace He will honour with the crown of glory, immortality, and eternal life."

Having thus shown that there are two distinct kinds of faith, Mr. M'Kenzie proceeds to trace out the workings of that faith which is real, genuine, and saving:

"But let us endeavour to speak a little on the nature and operations of true faith in the heart.

"Some suppose that we have no faith till we believe in Jesus to the pardon of our sins and the knowledge of our salvation. Others, who will perhaps not go quite so far, will condemn and cry down everything but the full assurance of interest in the redemption of Christ, trampling under foot all doubts and fears, gloomy forebodings, soul-sinking helplessness, inward faintings, sighs and groans, darkness and temptation; and make much ado about looking out of self, living upon Christ above their frames and feelings, and being determined not to look at their sins, guilt, and misery. But such faith is not of God, neither are such "plagued like other men;" (Ps. lxxiii. 5;) for though the Lord's people do not live on their frames and feelings, they cannot live *without* frames and feelings. Heart belief (Rom. x. 10) lodges and lives in the heart; and it cannot stir, either up into heaven or down into the depths of depravity, or look sideways at Sinai or forward to Zion, without producing feelings of some kind, whether pleasant or painful, joyous or grievous. Others, again, talk about their experience and divine things, and pray, and go on in a profession as though they had never heard of the blessed sealing of the Spirit, nor believed that it must be experienced by the people of God, nor expected to experience it themselves. These are errors in the professing world, which he who has eyes to see may easily discern; and errors, too, to be found in some of the people of God. The two former are the worst, and those which head-knowledge Calvinists and letter preachers and professors are most liable to. Such are, therefore, a plague, and source of perplexity and distress to the Lord's living and tried people. In this letter assurance and presumptuous confidence their consciences are, as it

were, cased in a coat of mail, which wards off every arrow from the mouth of God's servants. They esteem all the darts in God's word against them as stubble, and "laugh at the shaking of a spear," (Job xli. 29,) because "the flakes of their flesh are joined together; they are firm in themselves. Their heart is as firm as a stone; yea, as hard as a piece of the nether millstone." "They cover their faces with their fatness, and make collops of fat on their flanks, and run upon the thick bosses of God's bucklers." (Job xv. 26, 27.) Such are generally light, carnal, and worldly, and have much of that vain and foolish jesting which is not convenient. Their conversation, or preaching, savours of theory, barrenness and presumption, more than of anything else. No tenderness of conscience, softness of spirit, filial fear, unaffected humility, gracious meekness, and spiritual mindedness, are manifested; nothing to minister grace, softness of heart, life, and comfort, but everything to harden, and gender bondage. Such hate a tried and exercised religion; dislike theirs to be brought to light and put their foot upon the neck of all doubts and fears, solemn suspicions, and heart-searchings about the reality of their religion. Religion which labours under so much gloom, darkness, helpless guilt, misery, and temptation is too mean and troublesome a religion for them; yet at times they will have sudden twitches of conscience that all is not right, seeing so much in the book of Job, the Psalms, and the experience of the prophets, apostles, and scripture saints that makes against them. But letter faith gets up, and swallows down, in general terms, the truths of the doctrines of grace, and thus quiets conscience."

We wish we could find room for his description of the marks given of gracious convictions of sin, which we think peculiarly excellent and searching; but we must extract what he says of "faith in the total helplessness of the creature:"

"He believes in the total helplessness of the creature to do anything spiritually good. And he does not believe this merely because he reads that 'without me ye can do nothing,' but from a process of painful inward teaching under the Spirit. There are three distinct stages in a Christian's experience, in which he learns the important but trying lesson of creature helplessness. 1. When under the law and the conviction of sin, and labouring for heaven by his works; 2. After he has had a faith's view of the salvation which is in Christ, and felt the necessity of having special promises and blessings applied to the heart, and pardon and assurance of salvation sealed upon the soul, but withheld for a season; 3. After his soul is sealed with the Spirit, and come to an assurance of salvation. In the first, he sees the utter inability of being saved by works, by feeling the spirituality of the law and holiness of God therein, and his own fallen nature. In the second, by being convinced he must have pardoning mercy manifested to his soul for himself, and favours and blessings sealed upon his heart, and labouring to obtain these things but cannot, and forced from inability to wait for them, groaning and sighing, fainting and sinking, till the Lord is pleased to rend the heavens and come down. In the third, he learns more clearly and perfectly his utter and entire helplessness to perform any spiritual thing whatever, and to resist and stand against the power of the devil, and the lust of sin in the hour of temptation, without the special power of God in his soul. The lesson of soul-helplessness proceeds thus: 1. The soul is convinced by the Spirit of the truth of a thing; 2. It is convinced of the want of that thing; 3. Of the absolute necessity of having that thing. 4. Of its total inability of creating or obtaining that thing, by endeavouring and utterly failing; 5. Then it is made to sigh and groan, and with labouring pangs ardently desires it, but feels no faith in the heart to believe that it will be given; then the Lord in his good time works in the heart the prayer of faith, and in due time answers that prayer: 'He will exalt you in due time.' There is sensibly felt in the soul the spirituality and divine nature of all the fruits of the Spirit, and the great difference there is betwixt them and their natural counterfeits: and a sense of the want of them is painfully felt. The beggary and vanity of natural religion is clearly seen. He feels that God is a Spirit, and must be 'worshipped in Spirit and in truth;' but he feels he cannot so worship him. He feels an

inward sense of utter inability to believe, hope, trust, pray, rejoice, and give thanks spiritually. He is bowed down and oppressed with sin, guilt, unbelief, distrust, and fears; nor can he create one single grace of the Spirit in his heart, or take one step in the spiritual path, if he were threatened with hell, or rewarded with heaven for it. Thus convinced of the spirituality and necessity of true religion, and his having a feeling sense of his great want of it, and his inability to produce it, he sighs and groans under the weight of helplessness, is at times almost pressed out of measure, and is even sometimes suspicious of the genuineness of his sighs and groans, because he feels a degree of insincerity and self-pity mixed with them."

And again :

"Another particular wherein he is made to feel his helplessness is, that he has never felt pardon sealed upon his soul to his satisfaction, never felt that assurance of his salvation and the work of grace in his heart that he wishes. He has had Jesus blessedly revealed to him as the salvation of the church, and with all his heart he has believed in him as such; but he has never had him revealed as his own personal Saviour, formed in his heart for himself as his hope of glory; and though he has much light, some hope, comfort, and sweetness in Christ as the salvation of God, he has not got what he wants, nor can he rest easy without it. He feels he must have the 'one thing needful,' the kingdom of God established in his soul, the pearl of great price fixed in his heart, the treasure hid in the field in his hand, the Spirit bearing witness to his spirit that he is one of the children of God, 'Abba Father' coming from his lips, the earnest of heaven sealed upon his soul. This, from the word of God, he sees must be experienced; and this he feels he has not experienced. Then his soul desires, prays, and wrestles for it; but the Lord is pleased to withhold it for some time, and in the interim he learns a deep and painful lesson of soul helplessness. He will, sigh, groan, long, watch, wait, and ardently desire it, but the Lord still withholds it. Then he sinks in his feelings and desponds of obtaining it, and is ready to give up all praying, waiting, or hoping for it. Then his heart faints because of the way, and he halts in it. He experiences the truth of that scripture, 'Hope deferred maketh the heart sick.' But fresh necessity of having the blessing will come down upon the soul; then fresh groans, prayers, and desires go up out of the heart, with 'strong cries and tears to him that is able to save;' but still it is withheld. Then he fears his cries, prayers, and tears are only like those of Esau, which will never be heard, because he 'found no place' but Mount Sinai for them. He thinks surely his prayers and desires cannot be right, because they are not heard and answered. At times a hope will strengthen, revive, and encourage him, from scripture descriptions of his case; or some promise will be sweetly applied to his soul; then he thanks God, and takes courage, and prays, and watches, and waits again. Thus he goes on long; sometimes gladdened, revived, and encouraged, at other times dismayed and sunk in misery; sometimes a bright hope, then again sunk in fears, and despondency, and utter helplessness; fretting, desponding, and rebelling; then distressed with the guilt of rebellion; then the poor soul falls down totally helpless, a lump of sin, guilt, unbelief, distrust, confusion, and wretchedness, neither able to pray nor let it alone, to get up nor lie still, but rolls about as if in 'the belly of hell;' (Jonah ii. 2,) and cries, 'My heart is disquieted within me;' and with Job, 'O that I knew where I might find him! Behold, I go forward, but he is not there; and backward, but I cannot perceive him; on the left hand, where he doth work, but I cannot behold him; he hideth himself on the right hand, that I cannot see him;' 'I will speak in the bitterness of my soul;' 'O that my grief were thoroughly weighed, and my calamity laid in the balances together!'"

These extracts will abundantly suffice to show the character of the sermon, and to confirm the opinion we have expressed of its clearness of detail, its accuracy of description, and pointedness of discrimination; and, therefore, we will make but one more extract, which shall be upon "the sealing" spoken of in the text :

“The heart is the wax, the earnest of our inheritance is the seal, and the Holy Ghost is the Sealer that stamps the impression. As to the immediate act of this sealing on the heart, and the peculiar feelings under it, they are better known and understood by the sweet experience of them than can be conveyed by words, or conceived in ideas. I shall, however, endeavour to speak of it briefly and plainly, according to the manner that the blessed Spirit was pleased to impress my soul with it after he had prepared me for it. The Spirit is not confined to any particular means in giving this rich blessing; he may give it under the preaching or reading of the word, or neither. But whatever outward means he may please to use, or should he, without any, come sovereignly and suddenly down upon the heart, the soul will feel fully assured it is the blessed Spirit within him. Nor is it anything in us, or done by us, that thus causes the blessed Spirit to descend upon the heart. It is the will and work of his own good pleasure, (Phil. ii. 13,) in his own set time to favour Zion. (Psa. cii. 13.) ‘Thus saith the Lord God, I do not this for your sake, O house of Israel, but for mine holy name’s sake.’ The sealing in the text is, ‘the earnest of the heavenly inheritance,’ which is a part and pledge of the immortal glory of God in Christ, sealed or impressed on the heart by the Holy Ghost. And when the Spirit seals the heart with this blessed seal, he descends, and softens, and anoints it, and sheds abroad therein the love and rich mercy of God, and the life and love and blood and death of Jesus, so that the heart will be dissolved and overwhelmed, the soul melted in the flames of love, mercy, glory, and heavenly blessedness, and the eyes flowing with tears of love and joy. Every attribute of God is endeared to the heart, till it burns with love to him; and this feeling contains a peculiarly heavenly and sacred delight and blessedness, and it will be so powerfully and sensibly felt in the heart, that it will be enjoyed as the earnest of immortal glory, a part of that glory that the souls of the redeemed will enjoy to all eternity. And the feeling is so distinct and powerful, that it bears evidence to the heart of its own divinity, and that it is the blessed sealing of the Spirit, the earnest pledge and foretaste of heaven. It brings with it assurance, pardon, and peace with God, and joy unspeakable and full of glory rises out of it. He feels that the blessed Spirit has come down and taken possession of his heart, and consecrated it as a sacred place to God, and sealed him up as his own property unto the day of redemption. He feels he is the temple of the Holy Ghost, and that the Spirit of God dwells in him, and the glory of the Lord has filled the house. (1 Kings viii. 11.) He feels that part of heaven is let down into his soul. And O the peculiar inexpressible sweet feelings of love, gratitude, contrition, and humility, mingled together, which fill the heart. He feels no sin, guilt, wrath, or fears; these are all put away; a sweet peace and calmness rests in his mind. God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost, have taken up their abode with him: ‘We will come unto him, and make our abode with him.’ It couches in it ‘the love of God shed abroad in the heart; ‘the Spirit of adoption, crying Abba, Father;’ ‘the Spirit bearing witness to our spirit that we are the children of God.’ And this causes the soul sweetly to rest in God, satisfied with his salvation, and delighted with the abundance of his glory. (Isa. lxvi. 11.) He now understands in a sweet measure that precious scripture, ‘Now he which stablisheth us with you in Christ, and hath anointed us, is God; who hath also sealed us, and given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts. (2 Cor. i. 21, 22.) This sealing enlarges the heart, enlightens the eyes, instructs the understanding, and puts into the soul a meek independence of men and things. Before this sealing is experienced, God is often viewed and felt as a righteous Judge, and his absolute Deity appears unapproachable and forbidding; but now by faith he sees him all love, grace, pardon, mercy, long-suffering, faithfulness, and abundant in goodness and truth. (Nehem. ix. 17.) Faith is willing and obedient. Working by love, it works freely and easily, and believes every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God. It lays the honour and glory of God and the doctrines of grace near to the heart, and produces sympathy and love to, and forbearance with the people of God, especially the tried and tempted. The eye of faith beholds glorious things in the law of love. The sweetness and power of truth rest upon the heart for many days, and the word of God, from time to time, is enjoyed as the bread of

heaven. It does not lift the soul up into pride, bombast, vain conversation, doctrines in the letter merely, lightly esteeming trials and afflictions, but it humbles the soul, and gives a placid, meek, and child-like spirit. It separates the heart from pride, presumption, vain show, and insincerity in self and others; it gives 'the spirit of power, and of love, and of a sound mind;' and produces discretion, sobriety, chastity, sincerity, honesty, and godly fear. It makes the conscience exceedingly tender and afraid of sin, inward and outward."

And now tell us, Christian readers, whether we have exaggerated, or over-estimated the sermon. Is it not, as we have described it, clear, searching, and discriminating? Does it not enter into the very marrow of Christian experience; and, with keen dissecting knife, does it not run into, and lay open all the hidden course of muscles, arteries, and nerves, bringing them to light, and demonstrating them (as the anatomical term is) to view? Would not a man, honest to himself (alas! how few are so) under such a discourse, feel his heart made bare, and judgment so laid to the line and righteousness to the plummet, that he would see whether he were hiding himself in refuges of lies or not? "Comparisons, it is said, are odious;" but perhaps so only because they bring out truth more nakedly and prominently; but be that as it may, we could not help secretly comparing the plain sermon of plain John M'Kenzie with the more elegant and refined discourse reviewed in our February number. And if Mr. Wright and his admirers want to know what does suit our critical, captious taste, and what we think a sermon should be, and what it should contend for, let them buy the discourse named at the head of our present article. And whence arises this difference? from this,—that the one is words, and the other things; the one theory, and the other experience; the one, man's wisdom, and the other, God's; the one, the neatly adorned offspring of the head, and the other, the genuine outpouring of a feeling, believing, and exercised heart.

And now, as our wont is, let us point out what strike us as blemishes in this otherwise excellent sermon:

1. The style is somewhat, we think, too diffuse in part. It has *our* fault—that it is not sufficiently condensed and concise. The ingot is too much beaten out. It were better were it not spread over so much surface, and were it somewhat thicker and more massive.

2. Akin to this fault, there is that of somewhat too much repetition. The same words occur sometimes in the same sentence, or the same idea, only a little varied in expression.

3. The sentences are sometimes too long and involved; and, though not ungrammatical, are so loose and straggling at times in their composition that the ideas become obscure and weakened, from wanting that clearness and compactness which are requisite for forcible writing. These are indeed mere blemishes of style; nor should we probably have alluded to them, did we not perceive, as we think, a striking difference between the earlier and latter portions of the sermon. Nothing, for instance, can be more clearly or compactly stated than the scriptural distinctions between true and false faith in our first extract; but as we go on, symptoms arise of that loose kind of composition to which we have adverted, until we are almost led to think that the author grew weary of his task before he

had got half through his sermon, and therefore hurried on as fast as he could to the end; or, what is perhaps nearer the truth, that his heart and soul being full of the subject, he wrote rapidly on, without paying any attention to the length or clearness of his sentences.

These blemishes being merely of style, are of little or no consequence; but we think that there is another fault, more connected with the very staple of the sermon, and that is:

4. That it assumes throughout that all Christians are led in the precise path pointed out. The author does indeed say, at the end of his discourse, that "he does not mean to lay it down, as a fixed rule, that all the particulars he has enumerated must be experienced previous to the sealing;" but this, after all, is but a *caveat* and a qualification, contrary to the drift and spirit that breathes through the whole. As we read, we are convinced, from its minuteness and accuracy of detail, that it is the author's own experience throughout; and though this gives it its chief value, yet, from the third person and not the first being employed, it necessarily assumes that the path traced out is the only path. And this impression, produced by the whole of the discourse, can scarcely be overcome by one sentence which, by way of qualification, comes at the end.

These are, however, but small blemishes, and scarcely worth noticing. The sermon is published at a remarkably cheap rate, (2d. for 40 closely printed pages,) which, we understand, is owing to the kind assistance of a friend, who bears the loss incurred by its cheapness; and we hope it may prove an additional recommendation, and tend to the wider diffusion of a sermon which we shall be glad to see extensively circulated.

POETRY.

"WE ARE THE CLAY, AND THOU OUR POTTER."

Oft has my soul in secret pour'd
Her earnest breathings to the Lord,
That he would visit my poor heart
And bid my idols thence depart.

O wondrous love that he should smile
On one so filthy, base, and vile!
Should break my chains and set me free,
And once again deliver me.

The gates of brass my Jesus broke
When to my soul he sweetly spoke;
The iron bars asunder flew
When my Beloved came in view.

I cried, "The favour seems too great
For me in such a low estate.
Dear Lord, I've oft forgotten thee,
And dost thou still remember me?"

"Yes, thou art mine, poor soul," he said,
"Thou needest not mine anger dread;

Thy wand'rings well deserve my rod,
But I am still thy faithful God.

"Thy base backslidings I will heal,
And thou shalt sweet contrition feel;
Mourn o'er the sins that made thee stray,
And from thine idols turn away."

Dear Saviour, while I bless thy name
My soul is fill'd with holy shame;
O take my heart, and let it be
Content and pleased with nought but thee.

Although thou hast my soul restored,
I cannot stand one moment, Lord,
Unless thou dost support me still,
And give me grace to do thy will.

Thy presence does my spirit cheer,
And makes me hope thou wilt appear

In every future trying case,
Till I behold thee face to face.

Nov. 25, 1842.

SARAH.

PRAYER ANSWERED.

Thy presence is sweet,
O glorious Lord!
Consolation and peace
I feel it afford.
I'll bless and I'll praise thee in raptures O glorious! O matchless! O great Three-
divine, in-One!
O make all my powers in the song to O how shall I praise thee for what thou
combine! hast done!

Jehovah, dear Jesus,
My Saviour and King,
Thy presence is sweet,
Lord, help me to sing,
To praise and to bless thee, speak good But this I can say, I'll praise thee the
of thy name, more
And spread all around me thy heart- When my soul is safely landed on Canaan's
cheering fame. blest shore.

C—, Jan. 2, 1843. ZACCHEUS.

THE KING'S HIGH WAY.

"These things have I spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world."—John xvi. 33.

The Travellers who're to Zion bound Surrounded oft by foe on foe,
Have here a dreary waste to tread; To whom I soon must fall a prey,
No lasting joy or peace is found Did not the Lord himself engage
In these dark regions of the dead. To lead the blind in ways unknown.
Through tribulation's thorny road His faithfulness from age to age
The pilgrim must his path pursue; Proves that he'll ne'er forsake his own.
It is the way the Saviour trod, The rosy path that thousands go,
And saints must in his footsteps go. Although to them it right may seem,
Thus oft distress'd we mourning go, Leads down to death and endless woe
Our hearts discouraged by the way; Though much it's held in high esteem.
Our God withdrawn, whilst darkness, too, But the high road to endless joys
Surrounds our path from day to day. Is strait and narrow, trod by few;
How oft my soul in sorrow's vale 'Tis hidden from the worldly wise,
Has sunk beneath a mighty load And likewise from the prudent's view.
Of sin, and cares, and darts from hell, No vulture's eye this way hath seen,
And, what is worse, an absent God. No ravenous beast can travel there;
To find my heart, too, hard as steel; No, not one soul can walk therein
In vain seems all attempt to pray, But those who Christ's redemption share.
For death is all I then can feel; No, none but true-born sons of light
Yes, 'tis a rough and rugged way. Can travel in this narrow way;
Yet, though discouraged by the way The Holy Spirit guides them right;
When dreary clouds my path o'erspread, And leads them on to endless day.
At times I've felt a heavenly ray Though oft they fall they rise again,
To cheer my heart and raise my head. Though often faint they still pursue,
Then in the cross of my dear Lord For grace, triumphant grace, doth reign,
I find a sweet and sacred peace; And grace will bring them safely through.
The Spirit he unfolds the word, While I with joy the truth embrace.
Thus hope, at times, is bright and clear, The conflict soon for ever cease;
And peace and joy a while remain; The Lord will soon his chariot send
But when these seasons disappear And fetch you home in rest and peace.
I sink in sorrow's vale again. Then farewell, world, and farewell, sin,
Thus up and down, at times, I go, And farewell, self and Satan too;
O'er hills and vales pursue my way, No more to feel the plague within,
Nor pains, nor griefs, nor trouble know.

Sutton Banjer. A SMOKING FLAX.

THE GOSPEL STANDARD,

OR,

FEEBLE CHRISTIAN'S SUPPORT.

"Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness; for they shall be filled."—Matt. v. 6.

"Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began."—2 Tim. i. 9.

"The election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded."—Rom. xi. 7.

"If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest.—And they went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch; and he baptized him.—In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost."—Acts viii. 37, 38; Matt. xxviii. 19.

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VOL. IX.

"MANY DAUGHTERS HAVE DONE VIRTUOUSLY,
BUT THOU EXCELLEST THEM ALL."—PROV. xxxi. 29.

(Concluded from page 48.)

Her excellency is further discoverable in that the Spirit of truth is sent down to make sure work of all, turn the devil out of all, and take eternal possession of all; that, whilst all others are doing, the Spirit in them is undoing. Poor dear souls, they think it very strange that they cannot be a little holy or a little pious, have a little zeal or a little love, &c. But no; they must be stripped of all, and if one thing will not do to effect this part of the work, another shall. Sometimes there is such a self-willed determination in them to resist a sin, that God leaves them to fall into that very sin, whereby they are sickened of themselves and of all creature good, that He may reveal his own righteousness, which he will be sure to do before he gives the work up.

Rich garments must be worn to grace
The marriage of the Lamb;
No filthy rags to stench the place,
Nor nakedness to shame.

Now, herein consists her excellency, viz., *the imputed robe of Christ's righteousness*. Can we suppose that God's Son, the Son of his love, the Son of his bosom, should be given up to suffer, bleed, and die for a trivial purpose? No; were it not an affair of eternal glory, of which we at present know but little, an affair worthy the perfection of Him by whom it was contrived and invented, it could not have taken place; so well might Solomon say, "Thou excellest them all!" This is all done according to grace, though quite in opposition to the

natural will or desire of the parties whom it may concern, thus glorifying the riches of heaven in the poverty of its pensioners.

But again, the children of God excel all others *by the internal adorning of the Holy Ghost*. He therefore takes an inward possession of them, for the purpose of working in them that which is well pleasing in his sight; things that earthly eyes never saw, and that earthly ears never heard; as it is written: "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him." Therefore, as the virtues of the daughters consist in doings, the glory of the bride is of grace, through which, and by which she excelleth. The Eternal hath declared, "Thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, I dwell in the high and holy place, yet unto this man will I look, even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and that trembleth at my word,"—my word of justice, my word of mercy, my word of power, my word of glory. The Spirit, when he takes possession of the poor child of God, worketh all these things in his heart, so that he exactly answers the description given in the word of God. Yea, this is the Spirit's blessed covenant office; therefore it is that a tender conscience is given to each of them; and they cannot, neither dare they, presume to any thing that the Lord has not wrought in them by word and deed; for he says "they are children that will not lie." He is their Saviour, and they confess to him their poverty, their wretchedness, and their misery. Conscience bears testimony that all this is truth, and as He has promised to hear, so he saves according to that word of promise. It is not being outwardly clean from sin that is an evidence, but the confession of sin, and forsaking sin as to the love of it, that, according to the Spirit, marks the child of God, and, by giving him a tender conscience, keeps him in the fear of the Lord. He measures his religion by the laws of God, and not by the laws of man; so this is why the children of God so often mourn as they go along. They want divine approbation, they want the witness of some one greater than man; and they shall have it too. "Wait on the Lord, and be of good courage, for he shall bring it to pass. He shall bring forth thy righteousness as the light, and thy judgment as the noon day." This will please the Lord better than burnt sacrifices, or a bullock that hath horns and hoofs. Into this secret the daughters by profession only never come; but the wife, lying in the bosom of her husband, draws all the secrets out of his dear heart; so the secret of the Lord is with those that fear him, and also with those that have a tender regard for his honour. His word, therefore, is her directory, and she yields obedience to him alone, although she is, by reason of her darkness, sometimes unconscious of it. The Spirit worketh this grace into and within her, for she is God's workmanship, and herein is her excellency. The King's own daughter is all glorious within; she receives virtue, or power, out of Christ; she is made partaker of his truth, his love, his holiness, and such virtue is sure to remove all her diseases, as it did the poor woman's that came behind him in the days of his flesh.

The fear of the Lord is another covenant feature that the Spirit

worketh of his own will and power, through which she excelleth all others. "I will put my fear in their hearts, and they shall not depart from me." This fear keeps the poor soul waiting for instruction at the feet of Jesus, for "the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom." A man possessed of this fear will not dare to tread with unhallowed steps the temple of God's holiness. The children of God are backward in divine things, and the thought of their officiating in any part of the service of the sanctuary strikes them dumb. The reason why there are so many running headlong into the ministry, and other offices, is because the fear of God does not keep them back. Such as they never wait for the cloud; they have dew and rain locked up, and the keys in their own possession; but the saint of God knows that unless the Lord Jesus draw him, he must lie and rot in a profession before he can do that which pleaseth God, and justifieth his own conscience. "Draw me and I will run after thee," is the language of his soul all the day long. Now, this is the obedience of a loving, constant, and honest wife; one that turneth not away. I believe that amidst all the carnality, and deadness, and coldness, through sin and temptation, of the children of God, they can never embrace the bosom of a stranger. "My sheep hear my voice, and they follow me; but a stranger will they not follow, for they know not the voice of strangers."

Love is another feature by which the bride of Christ excelleth. Love is of God, and they cannot but love the Lord; so therefore, if even they were to endeavour to hate him, give all up as lost, and expect to go to hell, he takes ways and means to bring in, and make his love to burn in their very hearts. The love of heaven cannot be stopped in its way towards them, even though they are dead in trespasses and sins; and we know it, for if it could have been stopped, sin would have done it before now. No; sin, that accursed thing to them, only works a way, through sorrow on account of it, for a brighter display of the glorious perfection of God's love, to be manifested in its divine and sovereign effects, and to take out all the dreadful stains of sin in the conscience. Even "the wrath of man shall praise thee, but the remainder of wrath thou wilt restrain." Love still raises them up in spite of themselves; and when, through their wounds, they better learn to know the properties of the healing medicine, they will come, in faith, to the Physician for a prevention as well as for a cure. Our diseases bring us, instrumentally, to the cure, and our experience of the riches and glory that are treasured up for poor sinners leads us to Him for health and strength, for riches and righteousness, for sin-conquering, as well as for sin-pardoning grace. These things are sure to draw a poor sinner's heart to love the dear Saviour, and love, by an Omnipotent sweetness, leads him into obedience.

Obedience, therefore, is the crowning feature of the excellency of the church of God. She will do him good, and not evil, all the days of her life, and the heart of her husband doth safely confide in her. Herein lies the grand difference between a wife and a concubine. The wife feels that she is one with her husband,

and therefore there is but one interest in the family. The concubine feels a separate interest. She knows she is not wedded, therefore lays by a little, lest she should some day be driven to her own resources. "I knew that thou wert an hard man," is the language of her heart, therefore she trusts her own wisdom and power. She leans upon the oars of human power, and never dares to trust to the strength of the waters of life to carry her through, in the silver streams thereof, to the end of the journey. But the language of the bride is, "My soul, wait thou only upon God, for my expectation is from him." She times her motions by his Spirit. Her eyes and heart are fixed upon her Husband, and she is enabled to say, "Speak, Lord, for thy servant heareth." His word of command is her rule of marching forward, his word of promise is her rule of strength, his word of power is her rule of motion, his oath and promise in the marriage covenant are her rule of confidence, his word of love is her rule of obedience, his word of grace is her rule of glory, the garments of salvation are honorable dresses in which she walks at court, and the inward motions of the Spirit are her fruit in which she labours, and for which she travails. That she may produce him an offspring bearing his features, and that her labours may distinguish him in the gates amongst the elders, she writes upon the garments of praises which she has wrought for him, in needlework of faith, hope, and love, "This is my Beloved, and this is my Friend, O ye daughters of Jerusalem!" To this he answers, "Many daughters have done virtuously, but thou excellest them all. Favour is deceitful, and beauty is vain, but a woman that feareth the Lord, she shall be praised. Give her the fruit of her hands, and let her own works praise her in the gates."

Norwich.

G. M.

TRUTH IN AMERICA.

(Continued from page 108.)

But the most difficult task is to draw the line distinctly and accurately between a real saint and a painted hypocrite. The hypocrite not only imitates the sincerely pious as nearly as he possibly can, but he associates with and claims kindred to them. To discriminate requires time and severe trials. God's people can never plead guilty to the charge which nominal Christians bring against them, namely, that they are hypocrites; but they willingly confess that hypocrites are among them. They will be discriminated either by *time* (for they cannot hold out) or by *trials*. The trials that detect the hypocrite are the following. [a.] Persecution. When persecution comes for the word's sake, by and by they are offended. Their object was to deceive, and on that ground they assumed the name of saints, and boasted of being pious persons. But this character is not of so much importance to them, that they will suffer disgrace, indignity, mockery, confiscation of goods, or death itself, on that account. When such severe trials come they shrink back. The storm sweeps away the thin covering, and their hypocrisy is laid open to public view.

[*b.*] The hypocrite is detected by his conduct, when opposition is made to religion under a disguised pretence of *justice*; for the prejudiced malicious enemies to heartfelt godliness dare not always openly oppose the work of the Spirit, and therefore, the better to answer their purpose, they cloak their opposition by fabricating some *ostensible* cause. Herein the hypocrite shows himself. In these devices against the godly he reveals his true character.

2. But there is a second class of men, in respect to whom also the precious must be separated from the vile, namely, *ministers of the Gospel*. The true and faithful servants of the Lord Jesus Christ are to be discriminated from all unconverted and graceless men who pass for ministers of Christ. [*a.*] From those who preach nothing but the *letter which killeth*, and never touch upon experimental or practical religion, except very slightly and briefly. [*b.*] From those who endeavour to imitate the close, heart-searching, discriminating preaching of Christ's ministers; but on a strict scrutiny are found to fall short like the magicians of Egypt, *who found a miracle they could not ape*.

These men are distinguished from genuine gospel ministers by the following marks. (1.) The one preaches doctrine only, the other both doctrine and experience. The one searches only the scriptures, the other searches also the heart with the candle of the word. The one heals where there is no wound, the other wounds first and then heals. (2.) There is also this difference: the one speaks of repentance, but cannot describe its exercises; the other clearly describes this work of the Spirit, by showing how it operates in a soul from its commencement. The one tells what faith is from his own imagination, or from books, and his description is generally applicable to a temporary faith; the other describes the true nature and exercises of faith, from the word of God and experience he has of the Spirit's work in his own heart, and tells what faith does, when it is weak or strong—doubtful or assured—flying to take refuge or safe in the fortress. The one speaks of the spiritual warfare within, and tells us that there is such a thing, but no farther; the other points out the inward operations and exercises, the fears and straits, the struggles and deliverances of gracious souls. (3.) He is farther discriminated by this mark: the one is inconsistent and contradictory. He often contradicts the experience of God's children, and frequently contradicts himself—one day saying it is so, and on another day saying different. But the true minister of Christ is consistent with the word, and with himself, and with the experience of God's precious saints. He has a word in season for the weary. He speaks from the heart and to the heart. (4.) The one is caressed by nominal professors, hypocrites, and temporary believers, and his friends are numerous; but the other is hated by them, and has many enemies. (5.) The one is *barely respected* by the people of God; but the other is more, he is *beloved* by them. There is not a creature on earth so affectionately loved, as God's people love godly ministers. This is, perhaps, the *best criterion*. They are nice observers; they try the *spirits*, whether they be of God, and their judgment is seldom found erroneous.

Thus you see, my brethren, the ministers of Christ have an arduous task assigned them, and no less necessary than arduous, namely, *to separate the precious from the vile.*

II. I am now to show, *that ministers who do this faithfully are as the mouth of God.* In treating this part of the subject, we shall consider (1.) what is implied in being the mouth of God. (2.) That to be the mouth of God is a necessary qualification of a gospel minister. And (3.) that it is his exclusive character.

A. What is implied in being *as the mouth of God*? Without doubt the following things are intended; (1.) God's lips are lips of truth. Out of the mouth of the Most High there proceedeth nothing but truth. He hath spoken, He hath revealed his whole counsel, purpose, and will, respecting salvation, through the sufferings and death of his Almighty Son, by faith in him; and respecting the dreadful end of all them that believe not his divine testimony. One who is as God's mouth shuns not to declare all the counsel of God; labours incessantly to deliver the whole of God's testimony, the whole of the truth. (2.) Such a one speaks with divine authority. He preaches the word, not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God. He has authority from God to preach, and he manifests this by his preaching. "By manifestation of the truth, he commends himself to every man's conscience in the sight of God." (2 Cor. iv. 2.) (3.) He speaks with divine power and energy; for the mouth of God speaks in thunder, so that the mountains quake, and all nature shakes and trembles. While Paul reasons, Felix trembles. (4.) His preaching carries conviction with it, and results in the conversion of sinners. Who can resist the power of conviction when the mouth of God speaks? "Is not my word like as a fire? saith the Lord; and like a hammer that breaketh the rock in pieces?" (Jer. xxiii. 29.) And so, when Peter speaks as God's mouth, the hearers are pricked in their hearts. (5.) By his sermons the children of God are comforted. God's mouth speaks peace to his people. His command is, "Comfort ye my people." The Lord God gives the tongue of the learned to his servants, that they should know how to speak a word in season to him that is weary. Barnabas was a son of consolation. And Paul blesses God thus: "Blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort; who comforteth us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God." (2 Cor. i. 3, 4.)

B. This is an absolutely necessary qualification of a gospel minister, that he be as the mouth of God. And this *phrase*, therefore, may rather be considered as a description of the character and conduct of a minister of Christ, than as a promised favour. God's mouth, speaking in his sacred revelation, makes this discrimination, takes forth the precious from the vile. Only such ministers who pursue the same course can be regarded as his mouth, in contradistinction to those smooth, velvet-mouthed preachers, who either send all to heaven who profess the Christian religion, or else wholly neg-

lect to point out the essential difference between real and counterfeit experience. They are not the servants of God who "sew pillows to all armholes;" who "for handfuls of barley and for pieces of bread slay the souls that should not die, and save the souls alive that should not live," by lying to the people, and who "with lies have made the heart of the righteous sad, whom God had not made sad; and strengthened the hands of the wicked." (Ezek. xiii. 18, 22.) But to each one of his own servants God saith, "Son of man, I have made thee a watchman unto the house of Israel: therefore hear the word at my mouth, and give them warning from me."

C. It is his *exclusive* character. Such, and no others, are God's mouth. I do not believe with some, that graceless hirelings are ever God's mouth for the conversion and regeneration of sinners. Graceless hirelings will never beget any by the gospel but such as resemble themselves. I believe every one will beget his own kind. A lion will beget a lion, but not a lion a sheep. A nominal professor will beget a nominal professor, but not a nominal professor a true convert. There is a conspiracy of such prophets in the land, and the Lord charges them that "they have devoured souls, as a roaring lion ravening the prey;" that "they have put no difference between the holy and profane, nor showed any difference between the unclean and the clean;" that "they have destroyed the souls of his people like ravening wolves to get dishonest gain;" and that "they have daubed with untempered mortar, saying, Thus saith the Lord God, when the Lord hath not spoken. (Ezek. xxii: 25, 28.)

A faithful servant of Christ gets what he speaks from Christ's mouth. "What shall I speak?" is his perpetual prayer to his blessed Master. He consults his Bible, which in a certain sense is God's mouth, but he is not satisfied with this; he consults the Lord in private, he prays the Lord to enlighten and direct him. A real servant of the Lord Jesus Christ gets most of his sermons on his knees, in his closet, from him who gives wisdom in secret. Yea, in this manner he advises with his blessed Master in all important matters.

APPLICATION.

I. From the subject thus explained, we infer,

1. That ministers of the gospel have an arduous task to perform. Whoever conceives that a minister has nothing else to do than to preach the general tenor of Christian doctrine, is greatly mistaken. It is to be feared that the generality of preachers set out in the ministry, without determining to make it their principal business to distinguish between the precious and the vile. But it is a very necessary part of a minister's duty. How is a hearer to discover what he is and where he belongs to, without such faithful dealing? And what does a true Christian more desire, than to know as clearly as possible what his true state before God is? Thus faithful ministers are helpers of the believer's joy.

2. It is a work and a task not to be limited exclusively to the ministers: it belongs also to every Christian to separate the precious from the vile, both as respects men and things, doctrine and expe-

rience. People of God, distinguish not only between your fellow professors, but between ministers too. Believe not the man who tells you, that you must have an equal esteem for *all ministers*. The truly experimental Christian cannot, and will not comply with this advice. He separates the precious from the vile.

3. Hence appears what ministers have to aim at, that their labours may be crowned with success, namely, that they may be as God's mouth in speaking to the people. And God's mouth *they must be*, or their preaching will no more be instrumental in converting sinners, than Tully's Orations or Cæsar's Commentaries. The promise of success is limited by the Lord to the ministers of his choice: "Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain: that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you". (John xv. 16.)

II. How glorious is the character of God's people and servants! Pious ministers are God's mouth. And pious people are God's precious ones. They are his precious jewels, his precious vessels, his precious children. It is true, you groan under many infirmities, your heart-sins often grieve you much, your sinful propensities are obstinate, and their suppression causes you a world of labour and much violent self-mortification; still you are the *precious of the Lord*, purchased by the death of his Son, sanctified and sealed by his Spirit, and preserved by his power. Many of you, perhaps, may be under the ministry of men who do not separate you from the vile, who would unite light and darkness, Christ and Belial; who endeavour to blend the body of Christ with the family of Satan: but do ye perform what your pastors neglect. Separate yourselves and come out from among them; touch not that which is unclean.

III. But, my unconverted hearers, what a wretched, what a deplorable class of men are ye? God himself declares you to be *vile*! Your hearts are vile; they are sinks of corruption, and enmity against God.

1. Ye openly wicked, ye are easily separated; there can be no difficulty as to your state and place. The drunkard, the robber, the sabbath-breaker, the blasphemer, the unclean, the profane, are all vile in the sight of God. Ye have no part nor lot with the people of God.

2. Ye mere nominal professors, with all your honesty, with all your head knowledge and head notions, with all your precision in the performance of external duties, ye are still among the number of the vile.

3. And ye hypocrites, however exact may be your imitations, however complete your counterfeit experience and talk, however imposing your painted outside, I hope to find you out, I hope to tear away your mask and expose your rottenness before I quit. I must separate you from the precious. [a.] You have entered upon this project of deception to answer some vile purpose, either, to promote your temporal interest, or to gratify your ambition; and, in spite of all you can do, your true motive will on some occasions leak out.

[b.] You seldom perform private devotion, because to make a show is all you aim at, and therefore you seldom recommend it. [c.] You are not a strict adherent to the people of God, you can easily shift about, you can just as well convene with the worldly-minded as with the pious; and, whenever the latter are persecuted and abused by the former, you do not step forward as their advocate, nor evince the truth of the apostle's assertion, that "when one member suffers, all the members suffer with it." [d.] You are not consistent with yourselves, nor uniform in your practice. Your religion is by starts. At times something occurs in your conduct that gives the lie to your profession. Your hope will perish. [e.] At the time of a general revival, when the Spirit of God comes to work powerfully, your mask becomes too thin, you then must stand back, your pretended piety loses all its false gloss.

IV. O that God would make me his mouth to you this morning to touch your hearts, to dart conviction into your minds, that you may lay aside all your hypocrisy, and become that in reality by regenerating grace which you now only appear to be. Your object must be defeated, your insincerity must be detected, even if not regenerated; and this will expose you to infamy. I verily believe that a hypocrite never escapes being brought to light, unless he dies soon after commencing his course of deception.

V. People of God, ye are precious; but this is not of yourselves; it is of free and sovereign grace. Ye were vile by nature, "the children of wrath, even as others." O amazing reflection! The great Jehovah condescended to look upon you, and to say, "Live; yes, in your blood, live." (Ezek. xvi. 6.) Be ye thankful, &c. Be careful that you do not sully your preciousness by the commission of sin. Watch and pray that you enter not into temptation, &c. Make it also your business to separate the precious from the vile. Distinguish between precious and vile doctrine, between precious and vile company, between precious and vile preaching. The Lord will separate you from the vile, and make you his mouth, to your family, to your neighbour, and in due time to bring you to glory."

[In laying the above extracts before our readers, we by no means intend to imply that we thereby approve of, or fully justify, every expression made use of. On the contrary, there are several expressions which we would gladly have altered or cancelled, had we considered it would have been honest so to do. But we think some allowance is to be made on the ground that the author wrote in a language which to him was a foreign one; and we would on this, as on other occasions, look to a man's drift more than to mere isolated expressions.—Eds.]

LETTER FROM MR. BRADFORD THE MARTYR TO CERTAIN OF HIS FRIENDS, N. S. AND R. C.

I wish to you, my good brethren, the same grace of God in Christ which I pray the Father of mercies to give me, for his holy name's sake. Amen.

Though I have not read your letter myself, because I would not

alienate my mind from conceived things to write to others, yet I have heard the sum of it, that it is of God's election; wherein I will briefly write to you my faith, and how I think it good and meet for a Christian man to wade in it.

I believe that man, made after the image of God, did fall from that blessed state to the condemnation of himself and all his posterity. I believe that Christ (for man being thus fallen) did oppose himself to the justice of God, as a Mediator, paying the ransom and price of redemption, and that all who believe in Christ are partakers of Christ and all his merits. I believe that faith and to believe in Christ (I speak not now of faith that man have by reason of miracles, John ii., xi., Acts viii., or by reason of earthly conveniences, Matt. xiii., custom, and authority of men, which is commonly seen, the hearts of them that so believe being not right and simple before God; but I speak of that faith which is indeed the true faith, the justifying and regenerating faith) I believe, I say, that this faith and belief in Christ are the work and gift of God, given to none but those who are the children of God, that is, to those whom God the Father, before the beginning of the world, predestinated in Christ to eternal life.

Thus do I wade in predestination in such a manner as he hath opened it. Though in God it be the first, yet to us it is the last opened; and, therefore, I begin with creation; whence I come to redemption; so on to justification; and then to election. In this manner, I am sure that warily and wisely a man may walk in it easily, by the light of God's Spirit in and by his word, seeing this faith is not given to all men, (2 Thess. iii.,) but to such only as are born of God, predestinated before the world was made, after the purpose and good will of God, which will we must not call in question; but, in fear and trembling, submit ourselves to it as to that which can will nothing otherwise than what is holy, just, and good, how far soever it may seem otherwise to our reason, which must needs be beaten down to be more careful for God's glory than for man's salvation, which dependeth only thereon, as God's children full well see; for they seek not the glory which cometh of men, but the glory which cometh of God. (Jer. ix.; John v.) They know God to be a God that doeth on earth not only mercy, but also judgment, which is his justice, and most just, although our foolish reason cannot see it; and in his knowledge they glory and rejoice, though others, through vain curiosity, grudge and murmur against it.

Thus briefly I have sent you my mind and meaning concerning the matter. Hereafter, you shall have (I think) your letter particularly answered by Mr. Philpot,* as also, if I have time, and you so require it, I will do.

JOHN BRADFORD.

NOTES UPON THE FOREGOING EPISTLE.

As touching the doctrine of election, (whereof this letter of Mr. Bradford, and many of his letters, do much treat,) three things must be considered. 1st, What God's election is, and what is the cause thereof; 2nd, How God's election proceedeth in working our salva-

* John Philpot the Martyr.

tion; 3rd, To whom God's election pertaineth, and how a man may be certain thereof.

Between predestination and election there is this difference:—Predestination is as well of the reprobate as of the elect; election pertaineth only to them that be saved. Predestination, in that it respecteth the reprobate, is called reprobation; in that it respecteth the saved, is called election. They are thus defined:—Predestination is the eternal decreement of God, purposed before in himself, what shall befall all men, either to salvation or damnation; election is the free mercy and grace of God, in his own will, through faith in Christ his Son, choosing and preferring unto life such as pleaseth him.

Firstly. In this definition of God's election, first go the mercy and grace of God as the causes thereof, whereby are excluded all the works of the law and merits of deserving, whether they go before faith or come after. So was Jacob chosen, and Esau refused, before either of them began to work.

Secondly. In that this mercy and grace of God in this definition is said to be free, thereby is to be noted the proceeding and working of God not to be bounded to any ordinary place, nor to any succession of chair,* nor to state or dignity of person, nor to worthiness of blood; but all goeth by the mere will of his own purpose. And thus was the outward race of Abraham after the flesh refused, which seemed to have the pre-eminence, and another seed after the Spirit raised up to Abraham of the stones, that is, of the Gentiles. So was the outward temple of Jerusalem, and chair of Moses, which seemed to be of price, forsaken, and God's chair advanced in other nations. So was tall Saul refused, and little David accepted; the rich, the proud, the wise of this world rejected, and the word of salvation daily opened to the poor and miserable objects; the high mountains cast under, and the low valleys exalted.

Thirdly. Where it is added, "in his own will." By this falleth down the free will and purpose of man, with all his actions, counsels, and strength of nature; according as it is written, "It is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy." So we see Israel ran long, and yet got nothing; the Gentiles began to set out later, and yet got the game. So they that came at the first hour did labour more, and yet they who came last were rewarded with the first. The working will of the pharisee seemed better, but the Lord's will was rather to justify the publican. The elder son had a better will to tarry with his father, and so did, indeed, and yet the fat calf was given to the younger son that ran away. Whereby, we are to understand how the matter goeth, not by the will of man, but by the will of God, as it pleaseth him to accept; according as it is written, "Which are born not of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." Furthermore, as all, then, goeth by the will of God only, and not by the will of man, so again here is to be noted that the will of God never goeth without faith in Christ Jesus his Son.

* These sound Church of England divines clearly rejected that popish figment of "Apostolical Succession," which the Puseyites lay so much stress on.

And, therefore, fourthly, is this clause added in the definition,—“through faith in Christ his Son,” which faith in Christ to usward maketh altogether; for, 1st, it certifieth us of God’s election, as this epistle of Mr. Bradford doth well express; for whosoever will be certain of election in God, let him first begin with his faith in Christ, which, if he find in him to stand firm, he may be sure, and nothing doubt, that he is one of the number of God’s elect. 2nd. The said faith, and nothing else, is the only means whereupon God’s mercy, election, vocation, and all God’s promises to salvation, do stay, according to the words of St. Paul, “If ye continue in the faith” (Col. i.) 3rd. This faith also is the immediate and next cause of our justification; according as it is written, “Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house.” (Acts xvi.)

Thus much touching the definition of election, with the causes thereof declared, which you see now to be no merits nor works of man, whether they go before or come after faith, but only the mere mercy of God through faith; for as all they that be born of Adam taste of his malediction, though they tasted not his apple, so all they that be born of Christ (which is by faith) take part of the obedience of Christ, although they never did that obedience themselves which was in him. (Rom. v.)

Now to the second consideration. Let us see, likewise, how and in what manner this election of God proceedeth in choosing and electing those that he ordaineth to salvation. The order is this, in those that are chosen to life:—First, God’s mercy and free grace bring forth election; election worketh vocation, or God’s holy calling; which vocation, through hearing, bringeth knowledge and faith of Christ; faith, through promise, obtaineth justification; justification, through hope, waiteth for glorification. Election is before time; vocation and faith come in time; justification and glorification are without end. Election, depending upon God’s free grace and will, excludeth all man’s will, blind fortune, chance, and peradventure; vocation, standing upon God’s election, excludeth all man’s wisdom, cunning, learning, intention, power, and presumption; faith in Christ, proceeding by the gift of the Holy Ghost, and freely justifying a man by God’s promise, excludeth all merits of men, all conditions of deserving, and all works of the law, both God’s law and man’s, with all other outward means whatsoever; justification cometh freely by faith, and standeth sure by promise; glorification, pertaining only to the life to come, by hope is looked for. Grace and mercy prevent;* election ordaineth; vocation prepareth and receiveth the word, whereby cometh faith; faith justifieth; justification bringeth glory. Election is the immediate and next cause of vocation; vocation, which is the working of God’s Spirit by the word, is the immediate and next cause of faith; faith is the immediate and next cause of justification.

This order and connection of causes is diligently to be observed, because of the papists, who have miserably confounded and inverted this doctrine; thus, teaching that Almighty God, so far forth as he foreseeeth man’s merits to come, so doth he dispense his election; that

* That is, go before, the old English meaning of the word.

the Lord recompenseth the grace of election, not to any merits preceding, but granteth the same to the merits which follow, as though we had our election by our holiness, that followeth after, and not rather have our holiness by God's election going before. But we, following the Scriptures, say otherwise, that the only cause of God's election is his own free mercy, and nothing else; as, for example, first, concerning election, if the questions be asked, "Why was Abraham chosen, and not Nachor? Why was Jacob chosen, and not Esau? Why was Moses elected, and Pharaoh hardened? Why was David accepted, and Saul refused? Why few be chosen, and many forsaken?" They cannot be answered otherwise than, "Because it was the good will of God." In like manner, touching vocation, and also faith, if the questions be asked, "Why were this vocation and gift of faith given to Cornelius the Gentile, and not to Tertullus the Jew; why to the poor, to the babes, and to the little ones of this world, of whom Christ speaketh, 'I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes;' (Matt. xi.) why to the unwise, the simple objects, and outcasts in this world, of whom St. Paul speaketh, 'Ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many,' &c.; (1 Cor. i.) why to the sinner, and not to the just? Why were the beggars by the highway called, and the bidden guests excluded?" We can go to no other cause than to God's purpose and election, and say with Christ our Saviour, "Even so, Father; for so it seemed good in thy sight." (Luke x.) And so for justification, likewise, if it be asked why the publican was justified, and not the pharisee; (Luke xviii.) why harlots and publicans go before the scribes and pharisees into the kingdom; (Matt. xxi.) why the son of the free woman was received, and the bondwoman's son, being the elder, was rejected; (Gen. xxi.) why Israel, that so long sought for righteousness, found it not, and the Gentiles, who sought not for it, found it, (Rom. ix,) we have no other cause to render than to say with St. Paul, that it is because they sought for it by works of the law, and not by faith, which faith, as it cometh not by man's will, (as the papists falsely pretend,) but only by the election and free gift of God, so it is only the immediate cause whereunto the promise of our salvation is annexed; according as we read, "Therefore it is of faith that it might be by grace; to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed;" (Rom. iv.) and, as we read in the same chapter, faith, believing in him who justifieth the ungodly, is imputed for righteousness. And thus, concerning the causes of our salvation, you see how faith in Christ, only and immediately, without any condition, doth justify us, being so linked with God's mercy and election that wheresoever election goeth before, there faith in Christ must needs follow after.

And again. Whosoever believeth in Christ Jesus, through the vocation of God, must needs be a partaker of God's election. Whereupon resulteth now the third note or consideration, which is, to consider whether a man in this life may be certain of his election. To answer this question, it is first to be understood that although our election and vocation simply indeed be known to God only in himself *a priori*,

yet, notwithstanding, it may be known to every particular faithful man,* *a posteriori*; that is, by means; which means is faith in Christ Jesus crucified. And, therefore, of election it is truly said that we must judge of election by that which cometh after; that is, by our faith and belief in Christ, which faith, although in time it followeth after election, yet is the proper and immediate cause assigned by the Scriptures, which not only justifieth us, but also certifieth us of this election of God. Whereunto, likewise, agreeth this present letter of Mr. Bradford, wherein he saith of election, "Though in God it be the first, yet to us it is the last opened; and, therefore, I begin with creation; whence I come to redemption; so on to justification; and then to election." Not that faith is the cause efficient of election, but rather the effect thereof, and is to us the cause certificatory, or the cause of our certification, whereby we are brought to the feeling and knowledge of our election in Christ; for albeit that election first be certain in the knowledge of God, yet, in our knowledge, faith only that we have in Christ is the thing that giveth to us our certificate and comfort of this election. Wherefore, whosoever desireth to be assured that he is one of the elect number of God, let him not climb up to heaven to know; but let him descend into himself, and there search for his faith in Christ the Son of God; and, if he find it to be sincere and unfeigned, by the working of God's Holy Spirit, let him stay, and so wrap himself wholly, both body and soul, under God's general promise, and encumber his head with no speculations, knowing this, "that whosoever believeth in him shall not perish," (John iii.,) shall not be confounded, (Rom. ix.,) shall not see death, (John viii.,) shall not enter into judgments, (John v.,) shall have everlasting life, (John iii.,) shall be saved, (Matt. xxviii.; Acts xvi.,) shall have remission of all his sins, (Acts x.,) shall be justified, (Rom. iii.; Gal. ii.,) shall have floods flowing out of him of water of life, (John vii.,) shall never die, (John xi.,) shall be raised in the last day, (John vi.,) shall find rest to his soul, and shall be refreshed. (Matt. xi.)

Now, then, let us discuss, in like manner, what is this faith whereof the Scriptures so much speak, for the more plain understanding of the simple; for there are many kinds of faith. A man may believe everything that is true; yet every truth doth not save, neither doth the believing of every truth justify a man. He that believeth that God created all things of might, believeth truly; he that believeth that God is a just God, that he is omnipotent, that he is merciful, that he is true of promise, believeth well, and holdeth the truth; so he that believeth that God hath his election from the beginning, and that he also is one of the same elect and predestinated, hath a good belief, and thinketh well; but this belief alone, except it be seasoned with another thing, will not serve to salvation, as it availed not the Jews, who, in all ages, have thought themselves to be the only elect people of God. The only faith which availeth to salvation is that whose object is the body and passion of Jesus Christ crucified; so that in the act of justifying, these two,

* That is, a believing man.

faith and Christ, have a mutual relation, and must always concur together—faith as the action which apprehendeth, and Christ as the object which is apprehended; for neither doth the passion of Christ save without faith, nor doth faith help except it be in Christ, as we see the body of man not sustained by bread and drink except they be received and conveyed into the stomach. Neither doth the receiving of every thing sustain man's body, except it be meat and drink, which have the power to give nourishment. In like sort it is with faith; for the believing of every thing doth not save, but only faith in the blood of Christ; neither, again, doth the blood of Christ profit us except it be received by faith. And as the sun, being the cause of all light, shineth not but to them who have eyes to see, and not to them either unless they will open their eyes to receive the light, so the passion is the efficient cause of salvation; but faith is that grace whereby the said passion is to us effectual. That is the reason why we say with the Scriptures that faith only justifieth us, not excluding thereby all other external causes that go before faith, as grace, mercy, election, vocation, the death of Christ, &c., all which are external causes, working our salvation through faith; but when we say that faith only justifieth us, the meaning thereof is this, that of all internal actions, motions, or operations in man, given to him by God, there is none other that contenteth and pleaseth God, or standing before his judgment, or can help any thing to the justifying of man before him, except this one action of faith in Jesus Christ the Son of God; for although the actions of praying, fasting, alms, patience, charity, repentance, and the fear and love of God, be high gifts in man, yet none of all these actions in man are imputed of God to salvation, but only this one action of faith in man upon Christ Jesus the Son of God; not that the action itself of believing, as it is a quality in man, doth so deserve; but because it taketh the dignity of the object; for, as I said, the act of justifying faith, as it is an action in man, is not to be considered alone, but must ever go with its object, and taketh its virtue therefrom, like as the looking up of the Israelites of old did not of itself procure any health unto them, but the promise made in the object, which was the brazen serpent whereupon they looked. In like manner are we saved by faith and spiritual looking up to the body of Christ crucified; the definition of which faith is, To believe Jesus Christ to be the Son of the living God, sent into the world, by his death to satisfy for our sins, and so to receive the same.

Thus much touching election and faith, with the order and explication of the causes necessary to be considered in our salvation, whereby may appear how far the pretended Catholics swerve from the truth of the Scriptures; for where the Scriptures, in declaring the cause of salvation, send us only to faith, these Catholics quite leave out faith, and, instead thereof, place in other conditions of doings, merits, will-works, pardons, masses, and especially auricular confession, with penance, satisfaction for our sins, &c.

[We have been obliged to omit and alter several expressions in the above extract from the writings of the Reformers where they have ascribed a justifying

power to faith, as though it were something more than a hand which received Christ's imputed righteousness. In this point they were inconsistent with themselves. Sometimes, for instance, they speak of faith, as towards the end of the foregoing extract, where they compare it to the eye whereby the bitten Israelite looked up to the brazen serpent. The eye did not heal, but healing virtue came through the eye into the body; so faith in itself neither heals nor saves, but is the channel of communication through which a Saviour's blood flows into the conscience. At other times, the Reformers speak of faith as a condition and a cause of justification, where they seem to us completely wrong. They do not make a distinction between justification in the court of heaven, and justification in the court of conscience, between Christ's glorious righteousness as the wedding garment outwardly, and the reception of it by faith inwardly. Thus they ascribe nearly as much to the hand of the creature in believing, as the Papists and Arminians do to the hand in working, and give a part of the glory (not indeed designedly) to the *dress wearer* which belongs wholly and solely to the *dress Maker*. We have therefore taken this dead fly out of the ointment, though we will not say a leg or a wing may not remain behind.—Eds.]

A SIP OF THE GOOD OLD WINE.

Dear Friend,—Yours I have received, and I would gladly comply with your request, on my way to L—; but I have been so shaken in my tabernacle by the rheumatism and the lumbago, for a length of time, that I am afraid to stop at A— as I go up. Should it, however, be the will of the Lord, on my return from L— I will stay one evening with you at A—, probably on Thursday evening, the 3rd of November.

I am glad to hear that you intend going to N—, and I hope the Lord will go with you and bless you with much of his presence and love in your own soul, and give you sweet liberty in publishing a free, full, finished, complete, eternal, and unalterable salvation. And may the Holy Ghost cause his doctrine to drop from your lips as rain, and his speech to distil as the dew, that the poor worms may come out of their holes, and show themselves men; for nothing will bring poor worm Jacob out of the holes where he is ensnared and hid in prison houses, but the holy anointing and the heavenly dew which attend his still small voice, whispering, "Fear not, worm Jacob, and ye men of Israel. I will help thee, saith the Lord and thy Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel. Behold, I will make thee a new sharp threshing instrument, having teeth; thou shalt thresh the mountains, and beat them small, and shalt make the hills as chaff; thou shalt fan them, and the wind shall carry them away, and the whirlwind shall scatter them; and thou shalt rejoice in the Lord, and shalt glory in the Holy One of Israel." And what or who can bind him, when the love, mercy, kindness, and compassion of his God is seen, felt, and enjoyed in his heart? Neither sin, men, nor devils. This, my dear friend, is the only place where my poor soul has to look for all the supplies that I ever need, whether for body or soul, for time or eternity. Though my broken cisterns, which can hold no water, may be dried up, this Fountain has never yet failed me. What a mercy it is, when the poor and needy seek water and can find none, and their tongues fail for thirst, and they are ready to give up all for a lost matter, that our covenant God should open rivers in high places and streams in the desert, to give drink to his

people, his chosen! "This people have I formed for myself; they shall show forth my praise." When we feel in our hearts such loving, kind, matchless, discriminating grace toward such beasts, dragons, and owls as we feel ourselves to be, is it possible for us to show forth any praise but God's? No, my friend; we have been taught by soul experience that a good tree bringeth forth good fruit, that a sweet fountain sendeth forth sweet streams, and that the blessed testimony of God as our Father brings sweet, humble, and firm confidence that we are the children of God, "and if children, then heirs, heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ." O the wonderful love, mercy, and grace of our adorable Three-One God, that ever he should bless such wretches with these blessed testimonies!

My dear friend, in my last affliction I had now and then some sweet moments of God's manifestations toward me, and my soul could say without stuttering or stammering: "For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed in us; for our light afflictions, which are but for a moment, work out for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory; while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen; for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal." It is sweet work to be here, even on the bed of affliction, and in the very prospect of death; yea, my soul could feel, and my tongue could truly utter, "When I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for thy rod and thy staff they comfort me." But you will be ready to say, "Are you always thus happy in the Lord?" Alas! no; for when the sweet love, presence, and smiles of my dear Lord are withdrawn, and there is nothing left but myself and the devil, there is nothing at work but what is earthly, sensual, and devilish; and we know well, to our sorrow, that flesh is flesh, that no good thing dwelleth there, and that no good thing can come from this source. I am a living witness that to be carnally minded is death; yea, and bless God I know that to be spiritually minded is life and peace; and, thanks be unto his dear name, I also know that it is God, and he alone, who can impart spiritual mindedness and its blessed fruits and effects. It is by feeling the powerful operations of the Spirit within, shutting the mouth of every enemy, and causing every mountain to be removed, that softens, melts, and humbles my soul, and gives such a meek and tender fear, that I am constrained to beg of the Lord that he will keep me from offending or dishonouring him, either in thought, word, or deed. But I know, to my sorrow, that when there is nothing but flesh at work in my heart, I am so full of everything that is vile and sinful, adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, and all manner of devilishness, that actually my very soul at times stands astonished, wondering where the scene will end. It is not all my knowledge in the doctrines of God's truth, in the letter of the word, that will drive these devils into their dens; it is not all my past experience that can do it, nor all my prayers, sighs, and tears. And, my friend, what comfort is it to my soul to have my judgment firmly established in the doctrines of truth, whilst my heart is full of

a host of devils, dragging me, tormenting me, upbraiding me, and foaming out all manner of awful blasphemies against Him whom my soul longs to love and adore? I am confident of this, that nothing short of the Lord himself coming and shining in my heart as the Sun of Righteousness, will cause these filthy devils to gather themselves into their dens, and enable my poor soul to go again to its delightful work of praise and adoration to my dear Father and Friend. I know that if some of those gentlemen who scoff at a feeling religion were in some of my places, they would tell a very different story; they would know, when they were famished nearly to death with hunger, that they must eat and feel the bread of life to do them good; if they had ever been in that place where their tongues failed for thirst, they must drink of the water of life, and feel its quenching, cooling, refreshing nature, before they could be satisfied; if ever they had been under the sentence of God's righteous law, with the sentence of damnation passed upon them, and expecting, with a rope about their necks, to be executed every moment, groaning and sighing out, "O Lord, let the sighing of the prisoner come up before thee, and by thy great power deliver thou those that are appointed to die," they would know that nothing short of feeling salvation in their hearts, in delivering their souls from damnation, would satisfy their hearts; and if they had a feeling sense of the leprosy within, they would not go round the country trampling upon feeling religion, and calling it nothing but fleshly stuff. No, poor things! they would know better. O wonderful, sovereign, discriminating grace, that ever you and poor worthless I should be brought to know what it is to be a fool, and be enabled to go to the Lord for wisdom, thus proving that he gives wisdom to those who have none in and of themselves, and feeling that we are nothing but a lump of sin, misery, helplessness, ignorance, disgrace, and ruin; and yet experiencing in our very souls that we are received graciously, loved freely, and clothed from head to foot with a spotless robe, which covers the multitude of cursed sins that would have damned us for ever! O the sweet fountain that is opened for the house of David and for the inhabitants of Jerusalem for sin and uncleanness! O my soul, where must thou have been plunged in, had not the dear Comforter plunged thee in this fountain, and made thee to feel its sweet, cleansing efficacy, in washing away all thy guilt, and bringing thee to serve God, not in the oldness of the letter, but in the newness of the Spirit? It is my constant cry that the dear Lord will ever keep me near to himself. O bless his dear name, what a sweet mercy it is to be kept feelingly sensible that we are nothing, and that Jesus is all and in all!

We are still moving on as a church and people much as usual, with now and then a token for good that the Lord is amongst us. I am sometimes much cast down, fearing that the Lord has left me, and that I shall have to go to the people without any message from God; for I am not like those ministers who can take their pen ink and paper into their study, and pick out a text, and divide and subdivide it, then commit it to memory, and on the Lord's day have it as straightforward as if it was printed before them. O no, my

friend, I have at times to beg, cry, and sigh for mine by the hour, with many dismal fears that God will never hear or answer my cry. Not one text strikes my mind, and I try to strike one myself, but cannot hit upon one; then the devil roars out, "Your preaching is all gone quite spark out;" and to-morrow perhaps eight hundred people may assemble to gaze at a poor dumb fool. Here I have had to go again with sighs and groans to God, till my very soul and body have been in such agony that I could not rest till I had some promise from the Lord that he would be with me. O how my soul has at these times been borne up by the cry, "If thy presence go not with me, send me not up hence. I cannot go without thee. I dare not go without thee. Wilt thou go with me?" And O the sweetness, courage, and fortitude I have felt, when the dear Lord has spoken with his still small voice, "Fear not, for I am with thee; be not dismayed, for I am thy God. I will help thee; yea, I will strengthen thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness." My friend, this makes all right, and I can go leaning upon my God for light to see, life to feel, memory to contain, liberty to bring forth, and application to seal it in the hearts of whom he will, without either pen ink or paper, or without having to say to the people, "More of this in its proper place." I have had, and still have, many moments of thanksgiving to God that he has, in a good measure, delivered me from a dreadfully rebellious heart, which I laboured under for many, many years, in consequence of the Lord not giving me light and understanding in the dark and mysterious parts of his word, that I might come before the people and open up the Scriptures to them. But I am now more convinced than ever I was that every sent servant of God has his work appointed, and that each one must do his own work, and every man of God shall receive his own reward. It is of no use for the servants of God to be jealous and afraid of one being greater and more useful than another; for "he that striveth for the mastery unlawfully shall not be crowned," and "he that would be the greatest must become the least." O how blessed it is to take the lowest room, and to hear the Prince of Peace sweetly say, "Come up higher!" "He will exalt them of low degree; he will raise the poor out of the dust, and lift the beggar from off the dunghill; he will honour them that honour him; he will pull down high looks, and the loftiness of man shall be laid low, and God alone shall be glorified.

O my dear friend, may God almighty give you and me a meek and quiet spirit, that we may be willing to be anything or nothing so that God may be glorified. I feel better satisfied than ever I did in going into the pulpit to speak of the things which I have tasted, handled, and felt, and to deliver my message with the ability God has given me, begging that he will keep me from uttering a multitude of empty, unmeaning words, that I may not darken counsel with words. But where am I rambling? You will be sick and tired of reading my poor scrawl.

That the Lord may bless you and be with you, is the prayer of your unworthy brother,

Trowbridge, Sep. 26, 1842.

J. W.

SACRED SPOTS.

My dear Brother in the life of Him who is the Resurrection and the Life of all who truly live,—I was glad to hear from you, and still more glad to find that you had been favoured with a solemn visit from and by the God-Man Mediator. There are some very sacred spots where the Lord the Spirit sometimes leads his dear children. One is the solemn garden of Gethsemane; and when the soul, under the teachings of the blessed Spirit, is indeed and in truth there, it has such a solemn view and feeling of the sufferings of Christ, that all created good drops its charms, and the whole glory of this world appears but a vain show at best. When in this blessed frame, sin appears awfully hateful, and all creature worth and worthiness as vile, filthy rags, whilst the soul is lost in holy wonder and amazement at the matchless love of Christ, and feelingly exclaims, “O love, immortal love! love manifested in a flood of the heart’s blood of the infinite Lover, wrung from his heart, as the effect of the base, vile transgressions of the characters loved. Can such love be fixed upon such a detestable wretch as I?” And while this amazing love and blood sweetly fixes itself upon the conscience, the soul, in wonder and surprise, is ready to say, “Dear Lord, it is too much, and too soul-overwhelming for such a poor, weak, vile worm as I to bear.” Still, whilst in this solemn frame of mind, we wish to gaze upon the glorious Lamb, bathed in blood, till we die. Then indeed we truly enter into the real spirit of Zech. xii. 10; nor can I help believing that this was what the apostle panted after, from a solemn remembrance of what he experienced when there before. (Phil. iii. 10.) To have vital fellowship with the sufferings of Christ is to be blessed indeed. Another sacred spot is to be brought into a measure of the glory of what you say you have been favoured with, some vital views and feelings of Immanuel, God with us, and we with God in this blessed Immanuel. To have a gracious measure of the glory of his godhead and manhood in one blessed Redeemer, revealed to the conscience by the power of God the Spirit, and to hold solemn converse with God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost, in this sacred spot, is to be favoured with a foretaste of heaven; and the more the blessed Spirit leads our souls into these sacred spots, the more empty will all mere head religion appear. To have Christ formed in our souls the hope of glory, and to feel, under the power and unction of God the Spirit, that we are formed or created in him, and have our standing in him, the glory of hope, (Eph. ii. 10; Col. i. 27; Isa. lx. 19,) is an indescribable favour. “The wise shall inherit glory.” (Prov. iii. 35.) And when the dear Lord favours us with a vital feeling of this, we can, in a sweet measure, speak of the glory of God’s kingdom, and talk of his power. (Ps. cxlv. 11.)

O my dear friend, what a vast difference there is between talking of the power and glory of God, when we solemnly feel our standing there, and talking about it without a feeling enjoyment

of it! The latter appears like the chattering of a prating fool, and the former like the free flow of the golden oil from the two anointed ones. (Zech. iv. 11—14.) But alas, alas! how often I stand, in my own feelings, like the prating fool! yet, through the matchless riches of God's grace, I at times feel a sweet flow of the divine oil into my own soul, and then preaching the glorious gospel of the blessed God is a most blessed work.

I am sorry, but not surprised, to hear what you say about — and —. O what a mercy it is to be preserved from presumption! Rather let us be dragged through a thousand hells than be left to presumption. It is through a measure of hell and heaven that God leads his people. By his divine teachings he keeps them from the delusions of the day, and keeps them as paupers, feelingly dependent upon Christ, and thirsting for fresh manifestations of his love and blood.

That you and I may more frequently feel our blessed standing in the life, love, and blood of God with us, is the prayer of,

Yours in the Lord,

Oct. 4, 1842.

W. G.

SOME UNPUBLISHED LETTERS OF THE LATE MR. BROOK, OF BRIGHTON, TO A CLERGYMAN OF THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND.

LETTER III.

Dear Sir,—I received your mournful epistle with my scrap of experience, and rejoice in the simplicity and honesty of your heart, which gives me good ground to hope that the Almighty is preparing you for that work whereunto I also am called; and no man is able to “divide the word of truth” rightly, till that word has found an entrance into his own soul. “The husbandman must first be a partaker of the fruits.” (2 Tim. ii. 6.) But you know there are many things previous to the ingathering of the crop. First ploughing, then sowing, then watering, then ripening. The plough must first enter the soil, and turn it up, expose it to the wintry blast, the descending showers, the keen frost, and rays of the sun. So the soul must first be turned up. “Plough up the fallow ground of your heart, and sow not among thorns.” “Break up the fallow ground,” (Jer. iv. 3,) and a great discovery is then made. The hardness and unprofitableness of man, his cursed and barren state are unfolded; many mysteries are then beginning to be cleared up; and God is in a fair way to be justified in his sayings. This he never can be till we are circumcised unto the Lord, and the foreskins of our hearts are taken away. We are then taught that if his fury come forth like fire, and burn that none can quench it, it is because of the evil of our doings. Under such teaching as this the Deist, Arminian, and Universalist are exposed and condemned; the human heart is uncovered in all its defilements, abominable filthiness, and iniquity; and the righteousness of God is discovered out of his law, which is holy, and his commandment, which is holy, and just, and good.

Such dealings with us as these will enable us to reach others' hearts. "Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh." And you know that we are intrusted as the messengers of God with his word, and this word going forth returns not void. But observe, it must first be *in us*, and then come forth. Not in our heads, nor yet in our tongues, but in our hearts. "He that hath my word, let him speak my word faithfully, for what is the chaff to the wheat, saith the Lord." (Jer. xxiii. 28.) And James tells us how we have this word. "Of his own will begat he us by the word of truth, that we might be a kind of first-fruits of his creatures." (James i. 18.) Being quickened we feel; and what we feel assuredly is the plague of our hearts, the curse of a broken law, and the wrath of a righteous God. Hence we get acquainted with such things as these,—enmity, rebellion, pride, unbelief, impenitence, hardness of heart, unprofitableness, perverseness, darkness, bondage, fear, dismay, and trouble. With these things there are fruits, and they are of God's all-sufficient Spirit.

Hear what he says, "Make the tree good, and the fruit will be good." But we see that the first work in making a tree good is to cut it up by the roots. The axe is laid to the root of the tree, and fruit is even here produced. Prayer, and strong crying, accepting the punishment of our iniquity transgressions and sins, waiting upon God, seeking his face, believing his word, resting upon his arm, turning from our evil ways; all these are fruits, and spring from the word of truth taking possession of our hearts.

You will, therefore, under such instruction as this (and going no further) be "a workman that needeth not to be ashamed." You will find a power accompanying it, and the hearts of many bearing testimony to it. You will find the intolerable burden of those forms in our addresses to God, which our forefathers laid upon us. You will feel, and so discover the impossibility of any awakened souls going to God in any other way and manner than by that which the Holy Ghost dictates. You will clearly separate from the host of blind guides that swarm in our land, both regulars and irregulars; and having been instructed with a high hand, you will be able to "discern between the righteous and the wicked, between him who serveth God, and him that serveth him not." (Mal. iii. 18.)

In process of time another word will take possession of you, even the word of reconciliation. "Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God"—"and this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you." This is called "the word of a king," and is sowed "in an honest, and good heart," that is broken up by the plough, and prepared. And the kingdom of God is described as "righteousness, and joy, and peace in the Holy Ghost."

You will then be an instrument of reconciliation, binding up, as well as tearing down; healing, as well as wounding; bringing again, as well as driving away. (Ezek. xxxiv. 4—16.)

Thus you will "do the work of an evangelist," and "make full proof of your ministry." May God Almighty grant it, for his name's sake, Amen, and Amen.

And now my dear sir, I have something to say. I understand that some friends, feeling for me, as poor and needy, have gone beyond the bounds prescribed by God in their zeal for my support. They have gone to the Assyrians for bread, and thereby afforded cause to the enemies to rejoice and contemn. I beg of you therefore, if you regard me, the word that I preach, and the Master that I serve, that you would, in my name, see that every sum subscribed be returned to its proper contributor.

God has hitherto provided for me in a wonderful way, and with a high hand, from his own family, and not from strangers and enemies. The honour of my blessed Lord constrains me to this step. Consider what I say, and do it. As the Lord liveth, I will not receive one penny from * * * * * till I know wherefore it is sent. If I am among you, I trust God will then open the hearts of his people towards me, if I need it, as a return for spiritual benefits; and shut up the hearts of the carnal, through their enmity to me as a servant of God. But I have no intention, at present, of stretching my line so far. God has work abundantly for me here.

God bless and keep you, so prays yours,

Brighton, June 6th, 1805.

W. J. BROOK.

THE HILL MIZAR.

Messrs. Editors,—It is now some years since it pleased God (after a long struggle in soul feeling, wherein sin and presumption, fear and self-pity, enmity to God, desire of annihilation, unbelief, fear of death and wrath, a terror of God's holiness, and now and then a longing for pardon and reconciliation, with other strange and paradoxical changes had alternately worked) to favour me with his presence whilst I was in a solitary place contemplating the glories of his person as the Saviour of the worst of sinners, longing to know him as mine, and sighing for the inward testimony of the Spirit. I felt, in a measure, that softness which is described by Hart, and an indescribable meekness, humility, and subjection before God came over me. I also felt much contrition, mingled with self-abhorrence, and a wonderful sense of the condescending compassion of Jesus to one so contrary to him. I felt that something great was at hand, and was constrained to ask and receive, that is, by faith. At that moment I perceived an open door, and on going in I saw there was no cloud before the throne of God. On kneeling before him I suddenly found that my burden was gone, and felt such an earnestness, fervour, and confidence as I never had before experienced. I could not help believing. My prayers were turned to praises, and my heart seemed ready to burst. I had no portion of scripture applied, but the God of the scripture was in my heart; and whilst the mercy and loving-kindness of a dying Redeemer were pouring in, I could not pour out my thankfulness fast enough. I rose from my knees, my eyes streaming with tears, and, finding myself alone with Jesus, felt that I then could have joyfully departed this life. In a few minutes after I was filled with dread that he would soon depart, and tried hard to

detain him, but he left me to wonder and adore him as all my salvation. This is my hill Mizar, which the Lord still keeps in my mind, and though Satan has disputed me out of many gleams and rays of warmth and life from the Sun of righteousness, I have felt that he cannot entirely wrest it from me. Many changes have I gone through. Sometimes fervid fits seize me, but they are often followed by coldness and deadness; at other times I am hoping and trusting, doubting and fearing. But this I have often found, and to the Lord's praise be it said, that the sufferings of Christ, whenever spoken of with feeling, always find an avenue to my heart. I feel a love to the speaker, and, when meditating thereon, long to embrace that truth. I would fain love that intense loving One, while admiring, with a mixture of tears of love, grief, and feeling desires, ardent desires, fixing on him who, I hope, loved me and died for me. O how I again long to feel a measure of that unction stealing over my soul, and, taking me away from self and sin, enabling me once more to partake of unspeakable peace and joy! I solemnly declare that I do believe no person has a right notion of what peace and joy mean until they experience this. But how the world allures; how the heart conceives and brings forth thoughts and feelings, all of which tend to dismay and terrify the soul, and if the world cannot understand what true peace and joy mean, I am sure they cannot know what shame and grief are, how the spirits droop, or how the head hangs. O how I have hated myself when death, in the feelings, the sad fruit of sin in the heart, enhanced my memory, recalling the former tenderness, peace, and love felt in secret with an agonizing Saviour, and then to feel careless, thoughtless, and indifferent. I go and hear sound preaching, nothing to offend, perhaps, but I often neither feel contrition nor humility at his feet, for all is winter in my soul. Who can abide his coldness? In the chequered path that I sometimes travel, mistrust and unbelief make me tremble at my anticipated end. When a ray of light, with a little warmth, like a winter sunbeam, causes some hope to spring up, thereby enabling me to read the Bible or one of Hart's hymns, I feel a thankfulness to God in my heart. But yet, after all, I am not satisfied with my state. I want to be more decided; I want to be more dead to the world; I want to feel more hatred to sin, more love to the brethren, more humility in the heart. I want accomplished in me an ability to make a surrender of soul and body into the hands of Christ, even as Peter did. This have I longed for ever since I heard Mr. —, a little time ago, dwell upon that subject. I was tempted to a legal working to obtain it, but all this turned out to be nothing but "vanity and vexation of spirit." I want to be more dependent on, and more earnest for the sovereign operations of the Holy Spirit, who alone can work this in me, or any thing else that is pleasing in the sight of God. He alone can bring any thing profitably to my soul concerning Jesus Christ, and him crucified, to whom, with the Father and the Son, be all the praise.

Jan. 17, 1843.

G. C.

WHEN HE HIDETH HIS FACE, WHO THEN CAN BEHOLD HIM?

I take my pen once more to write to my dear father in the Lord; but I can truly say it is with a trembling hand, and under great sinkings of spirit. I seem to be beset on all hands, and scarcely know what to do. At this very time Satan is busy tempting me not to write to you; but I feel that I must once more ask the reason I have not heard from you, having written to you about two months since, and requested the favour of a few lines from you. I have thought that perhaps you were exercised in mind about me, having seen me but twice, and knowing very little of me; and again, I have thought that probably you had discovered something wrong in my letter, and therefore thought it best to be silent. If so, I hope that God will forgive, and that you will look over it, but at the same time, I desire that you will faithfully tell me of it, for I know that I am a poor, weak, ignorant creature. But as far as I can remember, what was written were the desires of my inmost soul, and the Lord, who knows my heart, knows that I would not wish to deceive you. If you think me a hypocrite, tell me, for I should like you to be faithful. Be that as it may, I feel from my very heart that I must love you; yea, if you were to cut me off, I feel that there would be a secret something within me going out towards you, which has been the case ever since the dear Lord burst my bonds and set my soul at liberty, while reading "The Present State of Religion," written by you; for I felt then, and since too, at times, that if you went to heaven I should be there also, for your God was my God.

The week before last I was brought very low, and I felt as if my heart would break, for everything appeared to go wrong. I knew, indeed, what it was to have heaviness in my heart, which made me stoop, and what I wanted was a good word brought home by the Holy Ghost, to make me glad. But no comfort could I get; if I read the word, that seemed sealed up; when I fell on my knees, endeavouring to pour out my soul unto God, all appeared dark, above and below, within and without; for the Lord had hid his face, and I thought I should never see the light of the sun again; and when I met with those of the Lord's people with whom I had conversed on spiritual things, it was quite a burden to me, and, if you will believe me, I wanted to get away from them. But in the midst of all this, those words cheered me a little, "Turn ye to the strong hold; ye prisoners of hope." A sacred something seemed to spring in a moment heavenwards, and a little light broke in upon my soul; but still I was panting after something more, and my cry was, "Lord, do appear for me;" and on the Lord's day, previous to ascending the pulpit, my heart being very heavy, the dear Lord spoke these words home to my soul: "Fear not, stand still, and see the salvation of God;" and truly the sight was grand and glorious, for I could say with Thomas, "My Lord and my God." Although surrounded with a host of enemies within and without, I did believe that the Lord was fighting for me. But very soon the devil set upon me in

an unexpected way, but my confidence was not much shaken at the time, and these words sweetly followed: "The Lord shall fight for thee, and thou shalt hold thy peace; and all thine enemies shall be found liars." I could then go on in the strength of the Lord for some days, believing that the Lord would bring me through this world of trials, and at last land me in his eternal kingdom. But I soon began to sink again, and I am at this time very low, being much tried in various ways. I hope that the Lord will give you a spirit of prayer for me, and then I trust your hand will be guided to write again to a heavy-laden sinner. I should be very glad, and so would many of the Lord's people here, if you would come and see us; you would then know more about us. I hope the Lord will incline you to do so.

That the Lord may bless you abundantly, and still continue to make you a blessing to his church, is the desire and prayer of your unworthy brother in the bonds of the gospel,

Oddington, April 4, 1842.

G. G.

EDITORS' REVIEW.

The Gospel Penny Pulpit.—Palmer and Son, 18, Paternoster-Row.

Zoar Chapel Pulpit.—Justins and Son, 50, Mark-Lane.

The modern system of reporting sermons, and publishing them at a cheap rate, has, like most other things, its advantages and its disadvantages. Which of the two preponderate it may be difficult to determine; but this we think we may safely say, that the advantages belong most to the readers, and the disadvantages most to the preachers. A few of these may be summarily mentioned; and, first for the advantages.

1. Sermons by men of God, which would be otherwise confined to a comparatively small circle of hearers, are, by this system of reporting, widely diffused over the breadth and length of the land. We cannot but confidently hope that truth cannot be so widely spread without a blessing.

2. There are quickened souls, many more perhaps than we may suspect, who are at present so entangled in false churches and Arminian systems, that they rarely or never hear the voice of truth from the pulpit. Into their hands, sermons by men of truth, thus widely diffused, may providentially fall, that may touch their consciences, or meet their cases, which might be reached in no other way.

3. There are many little causes of truth scattered up and down the country, which, from poverty and other hindrances, cannot maintain a minister, and where they rarely hear a preached gospel. These are instrumentally kept together, and the souls of the hearers from time to time profited by hearing gospel sermons read by one of their number in their meetings for the worship of God. They are thus kept together as a little body, and preserved from wandering into strange and unwholesome pastures.

4. The sentiments and preaching of men of truth are usually much misrepresented. The wildest and most lying stories are abroad of what they are reported to have said from the pulpit. These discourses, then, taken down from their lips, are so many practical refutations of these slanderous calumnies; and the enemies of truth, who have gratified their malice by spreading such slanders, may be referred to these published discourses, and thus be silenced, if not confounded.

5. These published sermons of men of truth, may, in some cases, be the only memorials which the next generation may have of their names and labours. How glad we should be if some of Hart's sermons had been thus preserved. Many, too, of Mr. Huntington's discourses, the remembrance of which is now utterly lost, might, had this system of reporting been then in use, have been preserved to us, as they were taken down warm from his lips, full of all that savour and power with which the Lord the Spirit so richly anointed him.

6. We are thus also afforded an opportunity, as we sit at our firesides, to know what is really preached by ministers of acknowledged reputation. The very sermons which they preached a few days or weeks back are in our hands. We can read and re-read them, compare them with the word of God and our own experience, discover their weakness and their strength, have prejudices removed or strengthened, and subject them to an examination much more severe and searching than if we had heard the discourse itself delivered.

It cannot be denied that these are advantages; and that the extraordinary cheapness at which these sermons are now published multiplies these advantages by giving them so wide a circulation.

But let us as fairly take a review of the *disadvantages*. These, as we hinted, chiefly affect the preachers whose sermons are reported, and scarcely reach the reader.

1. Were we disposed to argue the question on mere worldly grounds, we might say that a minister has a property in his preached sermons, which is thus unceremoniously invaded. The law, therefore, acknowledges this right, and if called upon, would protect the preacher as it does the public lecturer on medicine, &c. But we presume few ministers of the gospel would claim this right. They freely receive and freely give; and if the Lord is pleased to bless their labours, that is their highest reward.

2. But a more serious disadvantage is, that in whatever frame of mind a minister may be, however barren, dark, confused, or shut up, the reporter, in some secret corner, is taking down every word that drops from his lips. And this acts in a twofold way, and each disadvantageously. If he is shut up and slow in his delivery from want of words or ideas, the reporter gives a faithful transcript of his embarrassment. If, on the contrary, he is indulged with some little liberty, his ideas and words flow too rapidly for any but the most practised reporter to follow, and the consequent omissions make that obscure, which, in delivery, was connected and clear.

3. In order to report faithfully the sermons of men of truth, the reporters should themselves be, if not partakers of grace experimentally, yet acquainted with the leading features of truth doctrinally. A reporter who understood not a particle of law, would be a very unfit person to report a legal argument in Chancery; or one who was perfectly ignorant of medicine would be very inadequate to report a lecture on anatomy. So a man who knows nothing of divine truth, and is, if anything at all, a thorough Arminian, must be a most inadequate reporter of a sermon preached by a man of truth. Indeed, no minister should permit a sermon of his to be published without seeing the proof sheet, as he will be liable otherwise to endless misrepresentations.

4. A sermon may be much blessed when preached, and yet when taken down word for word may greatly disappoint expectation. The unction and power which rested on the minister, and which accompanied the word to many of his hearers, may be quite lost and evaporated, when it comes to be printed. The words indeed are the same, but the sweet savour which made them more than words, and caused them to drop like honey and honeycomb is gone, and we have, as it were, the breathless corpse without the life that animated it.

5. A sermon preached is not the same thing as a sermon in print; and what from the pulpit was rich and full, will often be very poor and meagre when taken down word by word. A sermon, to read well, should be full of ideas, original expressions, and striking illustrations. Repetition, long and involved sentences, and a paucity of ideas can be borne with when we listen to a man whom we love, and whose experience suits our own; but these faults conspicuously appear when we read the same sermon at our own fire-side.

6. To have his sermons continually taken down, and that in various places, is a most severe and indeed unfair test for any minister. Not only texts are taken out of his hand, (for what congregation would not feel a measure of disappointment were a minister to give out the very same text from which they had read or heard a Penny Pulpit Sermon by him a week or two previous?) but also his experience, his ideas, his views on different parts of Scripture, his illustrations and comparisons are all forestalled, and, so to speak, *done with*, because they have all been heard or read before in one of these Penny Preachers. And if it be answered, which it may be most truly, that a sent servant of the Lord can never be exhausted, for the well within will ever flow with fresh and living water, yet it is also said that "the householder brings forth out of his treasure things new *and old*." (Matt. xiii. 52.) But if Penny Pulpits lay hold of every idea and illustration, and seize upon every grain of experience that the preacher brings forward, his old things will soon become as mouldy as the crusts of the Gibeonites, and his comparisons be worn as threadbare as his every-day black coat. Or if the people do not feel this, and the Lord "who maketh all things new," makes his old

things new to them, yet who can tell what temptations may not beset the preacher from Satan and himself to suppress what he wishes to say because it has been already said, and to say what he would not otherwise have said, merely to avoid irksome repetition? The Lord indeed may, and doubtless often does, mercifully supply his servants proportionably to these demands upon them, but we must consider that it is a great addition to their temptations, burdens, and exercises.

7. And lastly, the very knowledge or apprehension that a reporter is taking down their sermons is to many ministers a cause of serious embarrassment, and, though it acts in various ways, is usually a great check to that freedom without which the pulpit is little better than the stocks.

We might enlarge did time and space permit; but with all the disadvantages named, and there are others which we cannot now touch upon, we think, considering that the inconveniences affect the few, and the benefits reach the many, the advantages preponderate. The publications at the head of our present article have this great advantage over some other of a similar nature, that they only give sermons by gospel ministers. The inconsistency of reporting sermons by erroneous men, enemies of truth, and destitute of grace, is obvious indeed to all that fear God. And though selections may be made, yet it is at once more honest and consistent to publish sermons only by men of truth.

We will make two extracts from each of the publications noticed above. Our first shall be from the Gospel Penny Pulpit.

“Who can tell the exercises of the minds of the family of God; yea, of any individual Christian in particular? At times they are contracted, shut up, bound in spirit. The Bible is as a sealed book. The covenant of grace is not broken up to them. The providences of God are dark and mysterious. As it respects their own minds, they seem to be feeble-minded ones; their minds are not sufficiently expanded; they cannot come in. The word of the Lord seems to be altogether hid from them. Then again the good Lord is pleased, in the riches of his grace, to give them a little of that dew that waiteth for no man. He turns the bias of the mind, makes the heart soft, gains the affections, renews the will, and wins them over. He gently moulds, and moves, and draws them by the invincible power of divine grace and covenant love. David knew something of this. He went through this. We find that although he was raised to that pinnacle of honour, to be the king of Israel, yet he leaves the crown—the creature—to praise the Creator, God. He raises his note much higher, ascends and praises the great I AM as Lord over all.

“Though I may have seen changes, and many changes since that time, yet it must be so, and shall be so, that if this portion of the word of God belonged to me then, I am well nigh ready to say with Paul, ‘now much more so’. I have to experience ups and downs, bitters and sweets, contrary workings of divine providence, with chequered scenes and long and darksome nights. Then again a little melting and breaking of heart, by the glorious rising of the Sun of Righteousness, with healing in his wings, and coming into the soul. I have been more and more established in this point, that the Lord is our God, and that he did and really does love Zion. That in deed and in truth he will make that good which we have been singing—

‘He hates to put away.’”

And again,

“‘My meditation of him shall be sweet.’ Christians are people who pray: They pray a great deal more than the world is aware of. Sometimes their prayers are like Hannah’s—inwardly; they sigh and groan inwardly. How many groans have been wrung out of the hearts of the quickened family of God since the fall of Adam! How many groans, secret groans have come out of my heart since I professed—yea, and possessed too—since I professed to be a believer, to have faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. Ah, believer, you will prove through life and down to death, that there is that in the heart which will at times while in this world constrain thee to groan, yea, thou wilt be forced to sigh and groan because of the abominations thou findest and feelest to be there. I tell you what, though I believe in my heart and conscience in the main the Lord has had my heart for many years past, yet from gone by days, past experience as well as present, that though my mind is made up on this point, that were I never more to feel the struggle between the flesh and the spirit, but all should be calm and serene, always happy—yet my mind is certain of this, the old man of sin, corrupt nature, though he might be still, he is in my heart what he ever was. I believe Paul had it in his heart when he was caught up to the third heaven. Have not you, poor child of God, when you have felt the blood of Christ has been applied to your conscience, you have had a secret persuasion of all being right between God and the soul; though you may have concluded the battle was fought, the victory gained, that you should never see trouble any more, you have been led to see that which is born of the flesh is flesh, that corrupt nature is corrupt, that my nature being fallen it is now what it ever was or ever will be.”

“The Lord has a way of his own, peculiar to the saints; a way of healing sin-sick souls that those who have only the form of godliness know nothing of. To those who feel their sickness, he heals by a word, a touch—by an operation flowing from covenant love, being produced by the Lord the Spirit. Then, as a witness for God, I cannot help looking at such a text as this. When I am led to look at days that are past, sometimes, though ashamed of my youth, and the follies of my youth, yet really whilst I have been reflecting, and meditating, and contemplating, on acts that have passed, acts of open profanity—whilst thus meditating, that the Lord has by his own all-conquering grace, dying love, and by faith in Christ’s merit and blood, cancelled my vile transgressions—I have felt the briny tear flowing from my eyes.”
—*A Sermon by Mr. Smith, of Bedworth, from Ps. civ. 34.*

We have, as yet, seen but four numbers of the Zoar Pulpit, which is published at twopence, and confined to sermons preached at Zoar Chapel, Great Alie-Street.

We give an extract from a sermon by our friend Kershaw.

“But again. ‘The desire of the righteous shall be granted.’ Now then, there is another thing the soul wants to be satisfied about. He is desirous of knowing whether Jesus has loved him, and given himself for him; he wants to have a personal testimony of the love of Christ. He says, ‘What will it avail me that Jesus has loved patriarchs, prophets, and apostles, if he has not loved me, and shed his precious blood for me? I want to know the Lord for myself, to feel satisfied that he is mine; to be enabled to say, without doubt and fear, and that from God’s blessed testimony and unction in my soul, that I have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of my sins, according to the riches of his grace: and to use the language of Job as my own, ‘I know that my Redeemer liveth!’ I want to know that God is my heavenly Father, that Jesus is my Saviour, that the Spirit is my guide and teacher, and that heaven will be my eternal rest and home.’ I would say to such a precious soul as this, who has these desires, Cannot you give yourself these things? for there are many persons that say, ‘we are warranted to believe and rest upon the scriptures, and take God at his word.’ But this poor soul says, ‘If I could have made it clear to my mind, and satisfactory to my conscience, that I was washed in the blood of Jesus, and interested in the love of his heart, I should have convinced myself about it

long ago; but I cannot do it, for God knows the earnest cries and desires which have gone up from my heart to him to make these things clear to my soul! And, my friends, I have often been at this work; I have tried and toiled to apply Christ's blood and grace to my conscience: but I have found I could no more do it than I could pluck out the sun and stars from the heavens! And indeed, if I had the power to do it, then I could accomplish the work of the Spirit of God: but it is not in the power of any creature; it is the work of God himself; and it is he alone that can do it, and he will perform it in his own time and way!

"Now the Lord gives the desire first, and afterwards he satisfies the longing of the soul; he gives hungerings and thirstings after it. The desire may be long delayed, but nevertheless the fulfilment of it is sure, for 'the vision is for an appointed time, but in the end it shall speak, and not lie; though it tarry, wait for it; because it will surely come.'"

"There may be some poor cast-down soul present, who has long been waiting at the footstool of mercy, anxiously desiring to know when the Lord will be pleased to grant him the desires of his heart, by giving him an experimental knowledge and enjoyment of his personal interest in the redemption that is in Christ Jesus; and he may be ready to ask such a question as this, 'How long shall I be kept in the place of waiting?' Now, beloved, I cannot answer thee as to time. It may be the Lord's will to exercise thy faith and patience, and to keep thee long at his blessed feet. But that the desire of thy soul shall be granted at the last, we have his own sacred testimony; and I am sure that when he fulfils the desire of your heart, you will be satisfied then that his time is the best! But here I would say, that during the time such a longing, panting, hungering, and thirsting soul is seeking after a knowledge of these things, he will be sure to ply the means of God's grace; he will read his word, attend the ordinances of his house, and plead the promises of his grace; nor will he be without some tokens of the Lord's favour; he will impart to him some gratification of his desires; he will have some little drawings out of heart after him, though he will never rest satisfied until he is possessed of the full enjoyment of that which his soul seeks after! The Lord's people have many wants and desires, and they are only happy as they are brought into an apprehension of his love, and as they feel Jesus precious to them!"

POETRY.

"MY PRESENCE SHALL GO WITH THEE."—EXOD. XXXIII. 14.

O Lord, thou God of grace!	It has, in days now past,
Thy presence now display;	Turn'd dungeons into light;
Lord, let me see thy face;	Made prisoners shout and sing,
O! come without delay;	Though in the shades of night.*
Now may my soul thy goodness prove,	Thy presence, Lord, is still the same;
And triumph in redeeming love.	O! let me feel its matchless flame.
Thyself make known to me,	I have thy presence felt
And cause me to rejoice;	Most sweet, in days of old;
Accept a sinner's plea,	These thoughts refresh my mind,
And let me hear thy voice;	And make me still as bold,
Speak, Lord, with unctuous power to me,	Thy presence, Lord, still to implore:
"I from thy sins have set thee free."	Lord, let me feel as heretofore.
Thy presence, Lord, can cheer	O Lord! now hear my cry,
A heart as base as mine,	Thy presence now impart;
And make me sing and shout,	With all thy glorious train,
In raptures all divine,	Come reign within my heart;
"Jesus has died for sinful me,	And then in raptures I shall sing
And from my sins has set me free."	Thy wondrous power, O glorious King!

* Acts xvi. 25.

THE BENEFIT OF A MERCY SEAT.

When billows roar, and tempests toss,
 And Satan, with his hellish face,
 Derides my pain, laughs at my cross,
 How sweet is then a throne of grace!

How sweet none know but that tried soul
 Whose life's assaulted day and night,
 Who groans that he cannot control,
 Nor put one single foe to flight.

He feels his strength decaying fast,
 And "wonders where the scene will end;"
 He thinks the storm will ever last,
 And that on earth he has no friend.

Behold him mourning, sighing, sad,
 Like the lone swallow, hear his tale.
 With grief he chatters, "Hope is fled;
 I can't endure; my strength must fail.

"I fancied once that storms were gone,
 That I should doubt and fear no more;
 But woe is me! I feel undone;
 'Tis gone what I have felt before."

He looks before, behind, each way,
 But all seems hedged up; he sighs:
 "It is too much; my hopes give way;
 My God's for ever gone!" he cries.

He lifts his eyes to heaven; but still
 He finds no solid comfort there:
 He roars aloud, "Wretch that I feel!
 Must I indeed sink in despair?"

This is no idle tale, he thinks;
 His hope, his joy, his God, are fled;
 His case is desperate; he sinks;
 Loathing his life, longs to be dead.

His past experience will not do;
 He can no longer build thereon;
 His soul is pressed down with woe;
 'Tis God he wants; but God is gone.

'Tis now the powers of darkness boast,
 And triumph o'er this child of woe.
 Ah, Satan! but the child's not lost,
 Though thou art his most dreadful foe.

At eventide it shall be light,
 Tho' clouds surround his Father's face;
 Salford.

Satan shall then be put to flight,
 And this child sing of grace, free grace.

But, by and by, faint hope appears
 With "Who can tell but God's dear face
 I yet shall see, to banish fears?
 I'll venture to a throne of grace.

"I can but perish, if I go;
 Once more I'll try; perhaps he'll hear.
 My case is desperate, I know;
 I feel it; and it makes me fear."

Could you but see him, when alone,
 While thus cast down, his breast heaves
 up,
 "Help, Lord; Lord, help!" and then a
 groan;
 This is his prayer, with little hope.

When thus cast down, the Lord appears,
 And says to his poor storm-toss'd soul,
 "O thou afflicted child of fears,
 Thy sorrows are at my control.

"No weapon form'd 'gainst thee shall
 stand;
 I'll hold thee, keep thee safe from all.
 Who, who shall wrest thee from my hand,
 Or cause thee finally to fall?

My arm's omnipotent for thee;
 And thou shalt prove my love is such
 That all thy enemies shall flee;
 For thou canst never ask too much."

This is a path that no fowl knows;
 A road that's trodden but by few;
 The narrow way, where all oppose
 The soul that walks with heav'n in view.

But fear not, brethren here below;
 Here is no rest; no, that's above:
 Soon to our mansions we shall go,
 And dwell with God our Father, Love.

Here enemies, without, within,
 Assault and threaten to o'erwhelm:
 Poor Christian, waves nor floods of sin
 Shall drown thee; Christ is at the helm.

J. B.

GLEANNING.

"At Richmond I had both the Arminian and Antinomian errors to cope with. The latter I had never heard of before; nor did I know what to do with so strange a beast, which seemed all tongue and no heart. But I soon perceived that it was not a sheep, because there was no mark upon it, (Ezek. ix. 6,) nor could it feed upon the green pastures; (Ps. lxxix.) and I saw that it was too noisy a creature to rest at noon, (Song 1—7,) &c."—*Huntington's Kingdom of Heaven taken by Prayer.*

THE
GOSPEL STANDARD,
OR,
FEEBLE CHRISTIAN'S SUPPORT.

"Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness; for they shall be filled."—Matt. v. 6.

"Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began."—2 Tim. i. 9.

"The election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded."—Rom. xi. 7.

"If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest.—And they went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch; and he baptized him.—In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost."—Acts viii. 37, 38; Matt. xxviii. 19.

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VOL. IX.

SATAN'S SIEVE.

"And the Lord said, Simon, Simon, Behold, Satan hath desired to have you that he may sift you as wheat. But I have prayed for thee that thy faith fail not; and when thou art converted strengthen thy brethren."—Luke xxii. 31, 32.

In making a few remarks upon these words, as the Lord shall assist, I shall notice

I. The *desire of Satan*.

II. The *instrument* he makes use of, a *sieve*.

III. The *effects* of this sieve upon the children of God, or God's Simons.

IV. The *prayer* of Christ.

V. The *end* obtained.

I. *The desire of Satan.* We live in a day when religious folks and the devil are so well agreed, that they seldom fall out; but God's children and the devil are not agreed, and thus often quarrel. "I will put enmity," says God to the serpent, "between thee and the woman, between thy seed and her seed." The word of God cannot be broken. "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away." There are many who deny the very being of Satan altogether; but the scripture testimony and the experience of God's children agree to prove to a demonstration the truth of his existence; and he is the same now as he was under the Old Testament dispensation, a sworn enemy to God and to God's image in the saints. It is evident that there are multitudes of infernal spirits in the world, or else we must suppose the devil omniscient and omnipresent, because of the universal

spread of his influence over all the world, and the universality of his temptations of the children of God in the different parts of the world, at the same time. But though these satanic spirits gender strifes among men, they are perfectly agreed among themselves in one thing; they are one in infernal union, striving to one end. Therefore, when wicked men are said to "have *one* mind to give their power to the beast," it is through the influence of devils upon them. Devils appear, according to the Scriptures, to have their situation in the air, where they hold their courts and councils. I should suppose their nobles hold parliaments, which Christ calls "the gates of hell," as alluding to an ancient custom amongst men. (Eph. ii. 2; Matt. xvi. 18.) Others are messengers, according to the description concerning them, persuading Ahab. (1 Kings xxii. 20; 2 Chron. xviii. 19.) Others are executioners, to put in practice the devices of the lords and messages of the messengers. (Luke iv. 2, 33, 35; Acts xvi. 10; Luke viii. 2, 12, 27.) Now the desire of Satan is the counsel that is determined upon. As if they should say, "There is that fellow Peter, once a willing servant of ours; he is making himself mighty busy with that foe of ours, that Christ. Can we not contrive something that may shake his confidence?" Thus they betake themselves to deep and well-laid schemes, and one said after this manner and another said after that. (1 Kings xxii. 20.) At length it was resolved upon that a peculiar sieve (in their power to contrive) should shake him sufficiently to damp the warmth of his spirit. Peter's defence from this was an Allseeing Eye, which beheld all worlds and their numerous inhabitants, with every volition and motion, in one eternal glance, possessed with power to avenge the injury, and skill to turn the same to his own glory, and to the real advantage of Peter and the profit of his church in general. Here shines, to every believer in Christ, his eternal power and godhead. Peter's Lord apprized him of what was going on; but Peter not being capable of understanding the affair until afterwards, Christ, to meet any suspense or alarm, pointed his faith to the all-prevailing care of his ever-watchful Shepherd. (John xvii. 12.) I have often wondered that devils should so constantly trouble themselves to harass the people of God, seeing they must know that they are for ever taken out of their power by their being cast out of their hearts. There can be no doubt with them of their being rescued from them for ever. An expectation to recover them, then, cannot be the cause; but I have of late learned that there is an infernal joy to devils, and a satanic gratification to their infernal senses, to torment, and harass, and perplex those in whose hearts the Spirit of God has taken up his dwelling. And this seems to be the meaning of that speech, "Art thou come to torment us before the time?" Art thou come to destroy universally our resting places in the hearts of men, before the decreed time arrive? Which shows their knowledge to be superior to ours in some things, concerning their own affairs. Now this is that which causes the desire in satanic minds; this voracious appetite must be filled. Dust is the serpent's meat, and

the serpent's appetite must be gratified ; and as such he contrives a sieve, to sift a little dust from poor Peter, to gratify his proud stomach. The Lord, to make us more acquainted with his own power and grace to help, suffers these things ; and hence it is written, " If any man will live godly in Christ Jesus he shall suffer persecution." Yea, and the nearer he advances to the Lord Jesus in the life of faith, the more will he be assaulted by temptation, seeing there is a desire, a strong desire, in Satan to sift such ; for it is evident that Peter's faith was strong on most occasions. Therefore Satan attacks most violently the strongest believers.

II. By *the sieve*, in the second place, as it is composed of wires (or something that answers the same purpose) drawn across each other, I understand the depth of infernal wisdom. Men may talk of wisdom, but all fleshly wisdom is of the same kind as infernal wisdom, though much more shallow. Of this we have evidence in the numerous witchcrafts mentioned in the Scriptures. When men have got to the end of their own wits, they have gone to consult with evil spirits ; and we have constant proof that this practice is not even yet ceased, although, through the execution of good laws, we, as a nation, are perhaps more free from it than any other people under heaven. But those fine-drawn wires show that Satan knows well the constitution of every child of God. He first took the weakest, the woman, and the woman alone. This shows his craft too. He knows the weak sides of all God's children. He consults the time and the mode of attack, and makes sure work of it ; and the only possibility of escape is through Christ and his weapon of prayer as used by himself as the intercessor for his saints, or as put forth in them by his Spirit, and in answer to which the Lord sends deliverance. For, as Paul says, (Eph. vi. 12,) " we wrestle not against flesh and blood," or, that which is flesh and blood only, " but against principalities and powers, and against spiritual wickedness in high places." Dear child of God, how often do you find yourself attacked in the very secrets of your soul ! I think that, by the Lord " answering his people in the secret place of thunder," is meant the secrets in which God's children are much perplexed, and of which they dare not name a single word to their dearest friend on earth. This made David cry out, " As with a sword in my bones, I go bowed down all the day." God's children have all of them their peculiar secrets ; and here it is that the devil worries them, and tells them that there never was such a case as theirs, and that they have sinned beyond God's uttermost, and that it is all over with them now. Here he is too mighty for the poor children of God ; for they are in themselves sinful, and temptation stirs up sin, and thus Leviathan makes the deep of sin in their hearts to boil like a pot. (Job xli. 31.) Now Satan has gained his desire, to see one whom he can never destroy roaring by reason of the disquietude of his heart. O none can tell what a hell it is for the dear children of God to feel that what they so much hate overflows them, and this makes them cry, " All thy waves and thy billows are gone over me." And there is no escape ! The Master went this way with our sins

upon his blessed head ; and we must follow him, that we may, as a suffering Head and a suffering body, be glorified together. In this sifting, not only old constitutional sins are stirred up, but new ones are made manifest ; so that the poor soul is brought to conclude that there is nothing in earth or hell that bears the name of sin that he is not the subject of. This makes him cry out with Paul, " O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death ? " These things bring the soul into an acquaintance with Satan himself, show his infernal policy, and how impossible it is to escape his power ; and prove the truth of Peter's language, in his own soul's experience : " Your adversary, the devil, goeth about as a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour." This turns the soul's attention to Him who suffers it, as well as to him who works the temptation ; and it brings the soul, through sanctifying grace, to an acquaintance with itself, and thus prepares the way for a knowledge of the grace that is in Christ. There are many professors now-a-days like those in John Bunyan's time ; they are light of heel, and know nothing of these things, and so ridicule them. But these things are written in that sure word of prophecy, that when it is come to pass we may believe ; and the apostle saith, " Thanks be unto God, which always causeth us to triumph in Christ." (2 Cor. ii. 14.)

III. But I now come to *the effects* of this sieve.

All the while one is living in the enjoyment of Christ, in the first manifestations of his love, there is but little understood of the channel through which those blessings flow. The soul is truly aware that it is all of grace, but has little idea of what that grace is, that brought down the dear Saviour to suffer, bleed, and die for such vile wretches as we. But in order that we may somewhat regard these things, the Lord takes the sinner into his own hand, and gives him some lessons in the school of self as a sinner, that he may cause him to lift up his eyes, with real advantage, to the hills whence cometh his help.

In order to do this, the Lord shines by his Spirit into his inmost heart and soul, and shows him how many a formidable monster lurks there. Their form he can somewhat describe, but while they are still in their dens he is but little aware of their power. (Ps. civ. 22.) Now is the time for the desire of Satan to be gratified ; the Lord permits him to try his wisdom and his power in shaking a Simon of his in that curious and well-contrived sieve ; and no sooner does he begin to shake the sieve than those dusty parts of the child of God, being moved, begin to appear in their true colour ; and never could any one have thought or believed it to be possible that they had been such a lump of filth and misery as they now find themselves to be. Poor Job had but little idea of the awful curses that secreted themselves in the cloisters of his fallen nature until shaken in this sieve ; but no sooner were those sparks of the bottomless pit darted into his bosom, than they stuck into that combustible part, already big with inflammable matter, in the deep and awful recesses of his

heart. The only reason why Job did not curse God and die, was because God held him back; and I solemnly believe he was brought to know it when he exclaimed, "I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear, but now mine eye seeth thee; wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes." (Job xlii. 6.) Here was poor Job in the dust and ashes of his own heart, after he had been reduced by fire. So is every poor dear child of God, in this sieve, reduced, in feeling, to dust and ashes. (1 Pet. iv. 12.) "Thou," says Moses, the man of God, "turnest man to destruction, and then sayest, Return, ye children of men!" Isaiah, that highly-favoured prophet, saw the glory of the God of Israel, and cried out, "I am undone! I am a man of unclean lips! I dwell among a people of unclean lips!" And if Satan is suffered to sift such an one, and the Strength of Israel hides himself from him, he will not only cry, "From the crown of the head to the sole of the foot we are bruises, and wounds, and putrefying sores," but he will sink, in his feelings, into black despair, and think there is no possibility of escape. Jeremiah also, when shut up in his dungeon, appears to have had a little of this sifting when he cursed his day, his mother, and the messenger that brought tidings of his birth. He complains to God, thinks hardly of God, and speaks hardly of him. This was not the effect of his deep trials in particular, but of that awful rebellion which was interwoven in his very nature and constitution. Now the time of trial is an opportunity for Satan to use the sieve, and to make these things* evident to our senses, and oftentimes to expose us to others. David's psalms abound with instances of this sifting, (Ps. cii. ; lxix. 14, 15,) and Paul declares that, after his revelations of paradise, of that voice, and of those unspeakable words, lest he should be exalted above measure there was given him a thorn in the flesh, a messenger from Satan to buffet him. I believe the children of God generally think themselves alone in these things; but this is the old beaten path of tribulation. These are some of the footsteps of the flock; and I believe, after all, it is very profitable, and is the principal thing in experience that lays a foundation for real enjoyment, because it weans a soul from all false confidence in himself and others. Thus we see the wisdom of our great Refiner, in sitting by the furnace, holding all the elements in his hands, and the winds of temptation and tribulation in his fists.

In giving a word of instruction to the tried family, I would say: Be not surprised if you should find in this sifting the whole order of things inverted; for at such seasons you may expect to find the senses wandering, and misplacing themselves in a thousand different forms. Love will seem to wear the aspect of inordinate affection, and settle itself upon forbidden objects; the mind will be carried from the object that we desire to love, and fixed upon the object that we desire to hate, not only with respect to spiritual things, but even in natural ones. These things will lie heavy on the heart, and conscience will be severely wounded. The cry will be, "O wretched man that I am!" yea, and it will be found that there is an utter impossibility to commend oneself. It will make the man or woman appear loathsome in their own eyes; they will hate them-

selves more than the devil ; and the most loathsome creatures will be angels compared with their wretched selves. I have known what it is to be really sick at heart for days, yea, months and years, with only intervals of the fulfilment of that scripture, "they shall be holpen with a little help." I have felt many times up to the present so heartsick, with such a sense of the detestable qualities of my sinful nature, that I have loathed my very existence ; and I can say that a sight and sense of myself has made me roar by reason of the disquietude of my heart. Now this dust is that meal of the serpent by which his infernal appetite is filled. It is his very nature. This is the possession he has gained of us through the fall. Sin now appears exceeding sinful ; and in all this sifting Satan seems to say, "I will do what I will with my own." Thus, as Hart says,

"Flood after flood,
With mire and mud,

overwhelm us, and all is foul within us. I have observed the ebbings and flowings of these things like the tides ; which evidently proves, that as the moon causes the flowing of the waters of the great ocean, so Satan causes the ebbings and flowings of this ocean of iniquity within us. Thus our purposes are broken off, and we are driven and tossed about by fierce winds. This experience works in our souls the firm persuasion that if we are saved it must be by grace, and that that grace is something more than we once thought it to be. Thus Satan sifts, but God preserves the sifted. The state of the sinner is made sensible to himself ; and he understands those passages of the Scriptures that state the heart to be deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked ; and Paul's saying, "In me, that is, in my flesh, dwelleth no good thing."

But not only do the dusty parts of our heart and fallen nature appear in this sifting, but the chaffy parts of all our profession in religion. How apt we are, in our profession of religion, to bring the Lord in debtor to us, as though he needed us in the church, and our aid. I do not say that the Lord has no need of his people, as they are the body, the fulness of Him that filleth all in all ; but not to be indebted to us, as we would vainly suppose. For instance, all that we possess as Christians is the Lord's own grace, flowing richly from him, and is required to be spent to his own glory ; but there is that thievish disposition in our own hearts which we are not well aware of, until it is, like chaff, brought up to the top of the sieve, that we may view it to profit. So that, while the dusty part cleaveth to its fallen dust, to the earth, and to Satan, and desires gratification with its fellow dust, this chaff rises upward in this sieve to discover to us the real unprofitable nature of the creature. Christ says, "When ye have done all, say we are unprofitable servants." How apt are we to think, from an overheated zeal, that we will do so and so ; and it may appear, at first sight, to be right, because it has the welfare of Zion for its end. And it is possible for the flesh to live upon the offerings of God till it be, like the sons of Eli, glutted, and kick at God's sacrifices ; but, says Paul, "It is good to be always zealously affected in a good thing ;" and, I should add,

always in a good way. The name of our covenant God is "Jealous." He has honoured his Son, and he will have his people honour him too. I feel, to this day, when the Lord shines into my poor soul, or gives me liberty with him, or liberty in speaking of him, or any signal victory over sin, prone to take the glory to myself; but I am never right only when my soul can say, "Thou, Lord, hast wrought all our works in us." If we were duly affected with our own professed attachment to Christ and his gospel, we should rejoice as much when the Lord blesses Israel by other hands as by our own. But where is the man that can rejoice in every divine manifest display of God's power in others as in himself? Where is the man that can take an apparent slight from a brother or sister without resenting it? Where is that spirit of love to the saints which fulfils the precepts of Christ and the law of Christ, which law consists in laying down our lives for the brethren? Now, all that is contrary to this Christian spirit must be manifested as chaff, arising out of this fallen nature of ours, besides that disposition to make a gain of godliness. But, says Paul, "Godliness with contentment is great gain."

(To be continued.)

"I WILL RUN THE WAY OF THY COMMANDMENTS WHEN THOU HAST ENLARGED MY HEART."

Dear Friend,—I suppose that before this you have concluded that I had quite forgotten you, not having received a line from me for so long a time; but I can assure you that it is not the case, for I had a letter part written when it pleased Him who cannot do wrong to lay me on a bed of sickness for nearly six weeks, during which time I was only able to preach once. I was bad with the lumbago in my back, and could not sit up to write; but it has pleased the Lord to remove it in a good measure, and I have been enabled to go to chapel and speak a little for a few Lord's days. Blessed be the dear Lord, he bringeth down and he raiseth up again. I have had moments when I have felt afflictions to be very needful; and though they are not joyous to flesh and blood, yet, believing and feeling that they come from a kind Father, who is full of mercy, tenderness, love, and compassion, there is no murmuring, fretting, or rebelling against him. When this is the case, there is a sweet resignation to his sovereign pleasure, and we are constrained to exclaim, "The will of the Lord be done." But it is one thing to say it in word, and another thing to say it from the heart. When everything is contrary to flesh and blood, nothing short of the power of the Holy Ghost felt and enjoyed in our hearts can enable us in these seasons to fall into the hands of God, having no will of our own.

My dear friend, it is sweet work when we can rest in the Lord, who has ever been our help in all our times of trouble, and who has never failed us when there was no eye to pity, nor arm to help. O how often has my poor soul proved that the Lord is good, a stronghold in the day of trouble! The Lord knoweth them that put their trust in him. But I still find old nature is no better, for I am sorely

harassed, tormented, plagued, and sunk down on account of the dreadful filthiness, baseness, and wretchedness which I feel working in my heart against a good and gracious God. O my friend, it was but the other day my soul was so exceedingly sorrowful, self being loathed and abhorred in my own eyes, that I burst into tears and exclaimed, "I am a nuisance to a dunghill. O wretch that I am, can ever God look upon me again; can it be possible that he can ever give me another smile? What! look in love and mercy again upon such a monster in human shape!" I was actually afraid that it was horrid presumption to either pray for it, hope for it, or even to desire it. I know that there are plenty of professors of religion who can tell me that there is no necessity for my soul to be cast down about the old man of sin, for he is nailed to the cross, and is a conquered enemy, and never can destroy, and why be cast down about him? My friend, the *why* is because he works up all manner of filth, wretchedness, and misery in my heart against God. All his enmity and wrath are against that God who has ever been my Helper and Friend in all my times of need. There is not one glorious branch of truth that my soul has had times of handling and feeling to be my portion and my all, but this cursed old man laughs, mocks, and sneers at, and pours all manner of contempt upon it, telling me that the whole Bible is nothing but priestcraft, and that there is as much truth in the Turkish Alcoran, and that all my preaching, praying, talking, and rejoicing have all been nothing but a piece of deception, and I shall die a deceiver at last. These things raging, roaring, and fighting in my heart cause my soul to go mourning, and I hang my harp upon the willows, fearing that the mercy of the Lord is clean gone for ever, and that he will be favourable no more to such a base monster. Let others write or say what they will, I will have the last word; let them be who they will, if ever God brings my poor wandering, devil-dragged, harassed, shipwrecked soul into that sweet harbour of rest and peace "where the wicked cease from troubling, and where the weary are at rest," I shall have cause for the loudest song of free grace throughout all the regions of eternal day. And, blessed be the dear Lord, he does again make it manifest in my heart that he is my God, and my Father, and my Friend, by his still small voice assuring my soul that he is with me, saying, "Be not dismayed, for I am thy God." O the sweetness, strength, and fortitude! O the meekness, the tenderness, the self-abasement! O the praise, adoration, thanksgiving, honour, and glory which flow unto God when my poor soul hears and feels his heavenly voice, "Be not dismayed, for I am thy God!" The enemy flees, the world and its charms drop under my feet, the Bible opens with many exceedingly precious promises, the harp is taken from off the willows, and my poor soul goes once again and makes merry in the dance, and sings without stammering, "The Lord has done great things for me, whereof I am glad." I can do now, when he is doing all in me; I can stand now, when he sets my feet upon the Rock and I feel a firm footing; I can challenge earth and hell, men and devils, and dare them to their face, when "I am thy God" is felt in my soul; I can run after him without either tiring or fainting, when the

sweet cords of his love draw me; I can honour and glorify him, when his honour and glory are felt in my heart; I can look backward and forward, on the right hand and on the left; it is all right and straight, when he hath anointed my eyes with his eye-salve; and a blessed sight it is to see light in his light; I can thank him, and bless him, and adore him for every trouble, temptation, sorrow, and distress, when he shows me the needs be for it; so that you will perceive that I am the same in and out, up and down, emptied and filled, wounded and healed, stripped and clothed, famished and feeding, groaning and singing, dead and alive wretch as ever. And I can assure you that I envy not those professors of religion who are all faith, and are never plagued with unbelief; who are all love, and are never oppressed with hatred and enmity; who are always in a wealthy place, but never come into it through fire and water; who are for ever talking about prosperity, but know nothing about the day of adversity. No thanks to me that I am not wrapt up in such a religion, for I have tried hard and long to attain to it, and have called myself a thousand fools for being so wretched and miserable, seeing that God is love and changeth not, seeing and believing that salvation is perfected for ever by one offering, and that neither my feeling it or not feeling it can add to or diminish its completeness. I have thought within myself, why should I trouble about feelings? and I have tried again and again to be satisfied with a mere knowledge in the judgment of the doctrines of the written word of God, thinking what a comfortable thing it must be to let all things come and go without troubling my head, or my heart either, about inside things. I have scores of times tried hard to settle here; but the suggestion has again come into my soul, "Suppose I should at last be found to be one of the five foolish virgins, who had no oil in their lamps, and be for ever shut out of the kingdom of peace; suppose I should be proved at last to be one of the stony ground hearers, who anon received the word with joy, but had no root; suppose I should be found to be one of those who have merely a form of godliness without the power." O my friend, these things have again and again stirred up my soul to come unto God with cries and tears that he would once more give me a token that he is my God and I his child, and I cannot rest till he has decided the point in my soul; and O what sore conflicts I have passed through before the dear Lord has made it manifest to my soul that matters are all right and straight between him and my soul. I believe I have proved that text over and over again: "I will bring the third part through the fire, and will purify them as silver is purified, and try them as gold is tried; they shall call upon my name and I will hear them; I will say, It is my people; and they shall say, The Lord is my God." It is in this way that I come to a knowledge that God is my God, and that I am his child; it is by these things I live, and in these things is the life of my spirit. I can no more do without troubles and trials than I can do without comfort and joy; and I am firmly persuaded that God has tied them fast together, and that neither men nor devils can separate them. Whoever they are that know nothing of these changes fear not God; however they may talk

about religion, it is nothing but talk, and the talk of the lips only tends to penury. How many times have I envied those ministers who can enter into their studies on a Saturday morning, with pen, ink, and paper, and pick out a text, and divide it and sub-divide it, then arrange the different portions of God's word so as to introduce them in what they call their proper place, and go into the pulpit with a discourse as correct and straightforward in doctrine as if it had been printed before them, frequently saying, "More of this in its proper place!" I have many times thought what an easy way it was; but the dear Lord has again and again taught me that those who are sent to preach of man and by man must and will look for that which is most likely to meet with the applause and approbation of man, while those whom God sends and thrusts out into his vineyard must and will look for the approbation of God; and, therefore, instead of writing out their heads and tails, and committing them to memory, their cries and groans are unto God, that he will direct and lead them, and provide them with a message, and cause it to spring up in their hearts like a springing well, to run out of their mouths into the people's hearts like a running brook; the cry of their very soul to God is that they may not go to the people with the speech of them that are puffed up, but with power. What need has a minister of God for pen, ink, and paper? Cannot his God give him a memory to bring that message to the people which he will bless to their souls? Yes, bless his dear name, he both can and will, without their having to say, "More of this in its proper place;" for I believe in my soul that the Holy Ghost never misses bringing every word in its proper place. O that my poor soul may ever be kept from looking after the smiles of men or seeking any of their praise, that I may be kept very near to my God, and in my latter days have much of his presence, and may I be enabled to love and glorify him in body, soul, and spirit. My friend, my desire is that you and I may be kept very little in our own eyes, as poor beggars from day to day, well served with love and mercy, so that we may go in and out, finding pasture.

My kind love to your partner, hoping that she and all the little ones are well, and to all inquiring friends. That the Lord may ever be with you, is the prayer of your unworthy brother,

Trowbridge, Sep. 21, 1842.

J. W.

DARKENING AND BRIGHTENING VIEWS FROM SELF, IN A FRAGMENT ON THE KNOWLEDGE OF THE SAVIOUR.

Then, again, (which is so pleasing an engagement,) to know Christ in his immutability and perfections, what tongue can describe the mystery? What heart, inflamed with rapture, can set it forth? What feeling and what speech is adequate to the boundless expanse? Have we a line to sound it? or have we the keenest edge of feeling at all to touch upon it? I say *the keenest edge*, and *at all to touch*; for the most enlightened saint, and most touched with humility, is brought to feel himself brutish, and to spoil rather than heighten the beauty of Christ, on account of the sad and deep depravity in us, and the abominable blindness and degradation that still cleave to us.

Christ "is so wrapt up in the Deity," that the most enlightened saint wonders not that Arminians and those of the "jumble creed" think him a root out of a dry ground, and having no beauty in his finished work for a chosen race.

And, as regards this exalted Personage, here, my soul, let me acknowledge my own follies. I blush when I consider the stupidity, the earthy mind, the abominable self-righteousness, the deadness, the unprofitableness, and the presumption perverting into licentiousness, which I feel, at times, towards "the Altogether Lovely," the Lord Jesus. O blush, my soul! Blush, did I say? I could as soon create a world as, without the Holy Spirit's help, blush with *real* shame for all the crooked wickedness which I feel roaming about in my feelings, from time to time, against the Lord Jesus.

Thus the *unchangeable* love of God breaks on the dazzled eyesight spiritually. Happy soul, if *unchangeable love* melts thee to love in return! O the changeableness of my love, in return for unchangeable love on God's part! Wonder, and be astonished that God has ever put up with thee until this very time! O the unnumbered provocations wherewith I have provoked God to change, and destroy me! And does he not change? Does my dear God-Man, the Lord Jesus, still love me? Then I can bear testimony that he cleaveth closer than change or sin; for I believe I know Christ in the closest, tenderest, and warmest of all ties of relationship, namely, of union never to be severed; a relationship better than that of sons and of daughters. (Isa. lvi. 5.) And yet every passing vanity, every earthly sweet, every poor perishing charm of carnality, every polluted stream of attachment and comfort from creatures, every earthly trifle, every earthly pleasure, tempt my heart to start aside, and surrender my affections and betray Christ. Is there an object that passes the window,—is there any carnal or bodily satisfaction, but what, like tinder and sparks, catch my wandering heart, and, if agreeable, raise up an idol? And are there two outflowings from the *knowledge* of my Jesus to me thereupon; first, to make me, in some measure, effectually loathe myself for and fight against these unnumbered and ever-varying and ever-presenting idolatries; and, secondly, that the blessed knowledge or bond of love in Jesus is not snapped thereby, but that he loves me still, and that his knowledge shall triumph, and draw me "by the cords of a man," as the prophet speaks, to love, in some measure, in return, and unto repentance and abhorrence of self, and unto valour in fighting against the bewildering gayness of every idol?

Every perfection of God, as well as his immutability, as I have said, shines in Christ in behalf of the redeemed. The whole God-head shines with everlasting lines of beauty in him in behalf of, and in regard to, the chosen race. O boundless expanse! O vast field for everlasting contemplation, and for the richest entertainments to those who "have an eye to see!" May that eye be one of my spiritual faculties cleansed to glisten, free from creature corruption, on the everlasting sweets of Jesus, in a never-to-be dissolved knowledge of him; a bond or knowledge which will stand the wreck of time, and of every other tie, be it what it may!

To know Jesus, then, as well as God; to know the immutability and perfections of God and Christ unitedly, is to have justice and mercy kissing one another unto rapture, in the ravished heart where Christ is formed the hope of glory. Christ being the Omega, the last and the end of God's spiritual creation, when we have him in our heart experimentally and fully, we have all. Sensible union, though, like every other grace, only in part in this life is the highest state of apprehension, or rather of being apprehended of Christ. My soul, startled into astonishment at the boundless development by this union of Christ in me, ("whereby, when ye read, ye may understand my knowledge in the mystery,") droops and dies to all created objects. "Filled with all the fulness of God," through this union, is there any room in my soul for the brightest specks, "ready to vanish away," of any creature good? Moreover, the terrible winds of affliction have blown away the mists, and have shown me that creature good is, for the most part, but a spider's web. Entangled by it, we cannot fly into the purer atmosphere of spiritual delights. And when the whole Godhead shines gloriously through the Man Jesus as the Husband of the soul, it having him as such *actually* revealed in it, (which the Scriptures abundantly testify to,) lost in amazement, and transported with rapture and bliss, the soul bids farewell to every earthly object, while unchangeable and *perfect* love thus (every divine attribute or perfection concentrating also therein) bedims and blights the soul to every other good but God. Thus the blessed God becomes all in all. Such he has become unto me; and I will speak well of him, and glory in him. And may those who are kept at a distance, and held at arm's length of God, have the winds of sorrow, as I have had, battering down their pride, carnality, and worldliness; and then the Sun of Righteousness will shine as brightly serene in them as often he does in me, the harbinger and forerunner of eternal day, which streams from Jesus in the fulness of knowledge and of joy, which constitutes "the inheritance of the saints in light," who, in vital light, drink thus the endless streams of satisfaction where neither death nor unhappiness, woe nor darkness, shall ever come. Although thorny woe and buffeting tidings from Satan, self, and the world, cause me to be worried, stung, and goaded in my feelings; though, alas! I commit many errors, and though I am still driven, in trial and temptation, on as wide a sea of dismay as any one whatsoever whom I am acquainted with, and torn spiritually to the very "ends," the extremest, the uttermost, the most bewildered, and the most horribly frightening "ends of the earth," spiritually, as regards the least help from man, self, or mortals, put altogether; yet, having been swallowed up in all the fulness of God, as the apostle speaks; having not only tasted of, but having been drowned in the joys of God, drowned to any final and supreme love but God, I bask, at times, in the flow of uncreated joy, and am enabled to depend on that unchangeable and perfect God whom I thus know, to bring me finally where change, imperfection, and any remains of our terrible, terrible ignorance, shall never, never come.

Abingdon.

I. K.

THE OPERATIONS OF THE SPIRIT.

Messrs. Editors,—The elect of God are the only individuals that know any thing savingly of the Holy Spirit's work. The life and power of religion are most blessed, and every soul that is born of God, and enlightened, knows the difference between form and power. I hope I may say that I know something of the grace of life; and what an astonishing favour if it is so indeed!

This week has been a refreshing time to me, owing to the presence of the Lord; and the graces of the Spirit have been revived and strengthened. My soul has been melted down before the Lord, and his praise has been upon my tongue. I feel truly astonished at the goodness of the Lord to such an unworthy worm, and his sovereign love is all my delight. The ever-blessed Lord has permitted me to be sorely tried about my interest in his love, and I have been borne down very low on account of my hardness, darkness, and carnality. I have felt my barrenness and emptiness so much, that I have greatly feared that my religion was coming to nought. But, all praise to the ever-gracious God of Israel, I have felt very different of late. The Lord, I hope, has poured out upon me a spirit of grace and supplication, and my heart has been enlarged to that degree, that I have prayed with the Spirit and with the understanding also; and I am sure that none but heaven-born souls can ever know the value and blessedness of spiritual prayer. The Lord has permitted me to draw nigh to him, and freely confess my confusion and shame, my pride and emptiness. And O, I could freely pour out my complaint before him, and tell him my sore distress, and beg warmly for the operations of the Holy Ghost! How empty and poor, how carnal and lifeless I feel, when debarred the influence of divine grace. Who can tell the amazing difference between a name to live and divine life in the soul? I know of nothing so sweet and precious as real spiritual communion with the Lord. To have one's soul fixed upon the God of Israel; to be solemnly assured of his eternal love; to be persuaded that he is the portion of my soul for ever; what can be like it? O how empty does every thing else appear, and how dead I feel to the worldling's pleasure! What sweet and godly contrition flows from the heart at such times, what humbling views are felt, and how hateful indeed is every evil way! The fountain opened for sin and uncleanness is felt to be infinitely precious, and the plan of salvation fills the soul with wonder and gratitude. Every thing seems to be right. Past bitters are now made sweet. The dreadful terror of the Almighty could not be dispensed with, for pride has been broken down, false joys crushed, dead assurance disturbed, and the soul made to seek the Lord in sincerity; crying, "What should I know of present sweets, if it were not for past bitters?"

I am most truly persuaded that real religion is a very, very rare thing; yea, I can scarcely find it. Many, very many are pleased with that which burdens me. O what can I render unto the Lord for his unspeakable gift? Eternal life is something very great; and to be sensible that I am in possession of it by its effects, O amazing grace!

The soul longings and pantings after the Lord, the powerful constrainings of divine love, and the sweet power felt within that conquers my soul and brings me, as a little child, to the Redeemer's feet, bear witness to the reality of the thing. O that I could live nearer to the Lord! but there are thousands of things that are opposed to spirituality. How I pray to the Lord for a spiritual frame of mind, and when blessed with this how soon do I lose it! Some base lust or other springs up within me; some worldly care, or some tormenting fear, soon, very soon, robs me of my pleasure. I am sure that sin is opposed to grace, and that grace is opposed to sin; and that the works of the flesh and the works of the Spirit of God are very far apart. Carnal conversation from professing people burdens the mind. It wounds a tender conscience, and makes a real God-fearing man love retirement. His most lonely hours are then the sweetest. The powerful operations of the Holy Spirit, felt within, lead the soul to some private place or other, where it can, unmolestedly, hold fellowship with the Father of spirits. There is no wishing to be seen of men, but a shutting one's doors about one, and a praying in secret to that ever blessed God who is the joy of a believer's heart. Never, no never could I have entered into these things, I really believe, without divine teaching. These are some of the things that are hid from the wise and the prudent. The clear-headed, high-minded, self-confident, hard-hearted, and prating Calvinist is a stranger to these things. The holy anointing oil, the oil of joy, the elect alone enjoy. A soul truly anointed with this oil loves those things which carnal men hate, and he is compelled to be a very singular character; he can hold fellowship with but very few, and those few will not suit at all times; he has but one Friend that at all times is ready to listen to his spiritual prayers and praises; and it is all right that it should be so, for the Lord, and he only, is the portion of the soul. Sovereign love, atoning blood, imputed righteousness, and eternal union with the Lord Jesus, are solemn and glorious realities, when the Holy Spirit's work is felt within; and the glories of heaven, and their eternal nature, make parting time very desirable, "having a desire to depart and be with Christ, which is far better."

Rochford, Essex.

F. H.

A LOVE VISIT.

Most dearly beloved Brother in the Lord,—I am astonished at the amazing condescension and grace of our covenant God and Father, who,

"In such mysterious way,
Has once more made the crooked straight,
And turned my night to day."

Beloved, it was no chance work that you and I saw each other at —, but the special appointment of our all-wise God, who has led me to see light in his light. On Sunday night, after I was in bed, the dear Lord broke in upon my soul in such an amazing way, that it

"Thawed with beams of love divine,"

more or less, throughout the whole night. I verily thought that he would kill me with his love! O bless his precious name! He has shown me that this visit was entirely of his own moving and directing. A sweet sense of his matchless mercy and boundless love remained on my soul a great part of Monday, until I got home, when I attempted to pour out my heartfelt gratitude to him in return. But the holy oil had run somewhere else, and I found my cruise stayed. On Tuesday morning, when I rose from my bed, I found the oil of joy was again increased; so, with the Spirit, I poured it out with heart and soul, with supplications, at my Redeemer's feet. The Lord is with you, and will bless you! O the wonders he has shown me this week! His precious name is as ointment poured forth; O how my heart and soul do beg of him not to leave me any more! O how I abhor my wretched wanderings and my wretched self! How my poor soul begs of him to keep his throne in my heart! O to feel reconciled to him through his matchless mercy and boundless love! I feel him with me this moment, even while I write; and my desire and prayer to God is for my brothers and sisters in the Lord. Let others persecute you as they may, God Almighty is still with you; for by you is he glorified, and he shall make his work plain among you. I have not had so clear a manifestation, nor one which lasted so long, for some years; indeed,

"It is a heaven of saving grace
Shines through the smilings of his face."

O how I love him and abhor myself!

I have seen — since my return, and he feels thankful to God that the clouds I so much dreaded have broken with blessings on my head. My kind love to all your dear friends; and I am, in heart, in all your hearts by love. Mr. — is moved and directed of the Lord, and God will honour and bless him. I thought I saw there was something the matter in his mind, the last time I was with him on a Monday. It may be the devil was harassing him, because the Lord had so blessed my soul; the Lord has blessed him also, yea, and he shall be blessed. It is a good sign when the devil sets on with his malice and rage. If such be really the case, the Lord will appear, and the devil will flee in God's time.

Write as soon as convenient; I feel anxious to hear from you. That the love, grace, and mercy of God may be in you, and that you may abound in every good word and work, is the desire and prayer to God of yours, &c.

WATER OUT OF THE WELLS OF SALVATION.

My dear Friend,—I cannot forbear writing you a few lines, as the dear Lord has been pleased, in mercy, to bring me to realize, in a small degree, something of what it is to be brought through fire and water into a wealthy place, and to go forth from the prison-house in the strength of the Lord, making mention of his righteousness, and of his only, and saying, in my soul's feeling, "I will go into thine house with burnt offerings. I will pay thee my vows, which my lips

have uttered and my mouth hath spoken when I was in trouble.' I am also disposed to say, "Come and hear, all ye that fear God; and I will declare what he hath done for my soul," for truly he brought me to "cry unto him with my mouth," and he has been "extolled with my tongue." "Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me, bless his holy name." To his honour, I desire to record what he hath done for me, in bringing me to again realize something of the preciousness and joys of that ancient and enduring salvation which the eternal Trinity planned, which Jesus, in obedience and suffering, wrought, and which the Holy Spirit leads into a saving acquaintance with; the effect of which is peace with the Father, wrought out, flowing through, and given by the Son, and brought into the conscience by the Holy Ghost, sprinkling peace-speaking blood there, putting the justifying robe on the soul, and filling us with a divine sense of our acceptance with, and reconciliation to God, in the beloved, through himself "bearing witness with our spirits that we are the children of God." This brings us, in solemn experience, "to the acknowledgment of the mystery of God, (the Holy Ghost dwelling in us,) and of the Father, (loving us in, giving us to, and appointing us to obtain salvation by the Son,) and of Christ," our dear Immanuel, who obeyed and suffered in the stead of us unworthy sinners. What a solemn blessing to have "this testimony" in our souls, sealed there by the Holy Ghost, that we "please God," and are "accepted in the Beloved, in whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace." And how unspeakable a favour it is to be under the operation of the Spirit manifestly, of "the true circumcision which worship God in the Spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh." Do not think from the above, that I have had some extraordinary manifestations lately, I mean such as the Lord blesses but few of his people with, as Paul's being caught up into paradise, where he heard "unspeakable words which it is not lawful for a man to utter." But the Lord brought with sweetness and power into my soul, one day in the week before last, these words: "Therefore, with joy shall ye draw water out of the wells of salvation." My soul was enabled assuredly to believe that the words were from God, and that they would shortly be fulfilled in my experience, to the joy of my heart. O what a spirit of prayer for the fulfilment of the precious promise did I feel. How my poor soul cried, "Lord, fulfil it! Lord, fulfil it in my experience! Do as thou hast said," &c. Surely I could say with the Psalmist, "I wait for the Lord; my soul doth wait, and in his word (applied with power to my soul) do I hope." Many were my fears between the giving of the promise into my soul and the fulfilling it to the comfort of my heart. How did I at times fear that the words did not come from God, and that it would prove all fancy, and a delusion. Nevertheless, the Lord's name have the praise, through the power of the Spirit, "I sought the Lord, and he heard me, and delivered me from all my fears. I looked unto him, and was lightened, and my face was not ashamed, for this poor man cried, and the Lord heard him, and delivered him from all his fears." The time when the Lord thus remembered the word

unto his servant, upon which he had caused him to hope, was last Wednesday evening. So stupid, so earthly, and so dark had I been throughout most of the day, that I had almost lost sight of the promise. The eyes of my soul failed while I waited for his word, saying, "When wilt thou comfort me?" so that I could only cry, "Lighten thou mine eyes lest I sleep the sleep of death." I went to chapel, and in the course of the reading I read these words, "your Father," by which it was directly brought to my mind that the Lord had spoken these words with solemn power unto my soul many months previous; when, blessed be God, I again felt the Spirit of adoption, and could approach the Searcher of hearts, and say, with the witness of the Spirit, and the approbation of the conscience, "Abba Father." I could feel the dear Spirit strengthen me with might in the inner man, while I said of Jesus, "This is my Beloved, and this is my Friend that loveth me at all times." O with what a solemn sense of God's presence and approval in my soul could I take my leave of the people, assuring them that, if I never again saw them in the flesh, my soul believed that I was bound up in the bundle of life with the Lord my God. When I sat down in the pulpit I felt happy in God, for "he that dwelleth in love, dwelleth in God, and God in him." I put my head out of the sight of the people, and scores of times whispered from my soul, "O to grace how great a debtor! how great a debtor! how great a debtor! Lord, keep me! Lord, keep me!" After I left the place, I sat down by the fire and felt satisfied with God's favour, wondering at God's mercy, wanting no other company than that of my dear Lord, and no other converse than that of communion with him that dwelleth between the cherubims. Since then I have been learning afresh that no man can keep alive his own soul.

When I began to write this I did not think that I should have filled my paper quite so full as it is, and my time now tells me that I must once more subscribe myself, yours most sincerely in the love of the truth,

London, Nov. 4, 1842.

S.

BLESS THE LORD, O MY SOUL.

My dear Friend,—Yesterday morning from nine till ten o'clock my soul was again most sweetly blessed with the presence of the dear and blessed Lamb of God, the Lamb that was slain from before the foundation of the world. O matchless and boundless grace! the free grace of a Triune God! Never before this blessed affliction could I see and feel such an everlasting boundless fullness in Christ. Bless his dear and precious name, he has poured wine and oil into my sin-smitten soul, and given me to see and feel that my name is written in the dear and precious Lamb's book of life. O, thanks, thanks, thanks to his almighty immutable grace. I have not room for anything but a free, full, and finished salvation!

Dear friend, I now understand, in a small measure, what is meant by the words, "He wrought out and brought in an everlasting righteousness." O what a mercy that a blessed Triune God should

be pleased to condescend thus to bless fallen man! What a miracle is God's salvation, and what a miracle that he should be pleased to make it known to our souls by his almighty Spirit! Bless his dear and precious name, he will, yes, he will give grace and glory. O bless his dear almighty name, I wish I could love him more and praise him more; yea, I wish I could praise him without ceasing, for he alone is worthy. When I wrote on Friday, my poor weak body was so very much distressed, and my head so disordered, that I hardly know how I came to a conclusion. If any thing was wrong you will please to excuse it. I should be glad to receive a few lines from you.

Tell it unto sinners, tell
I am, I am out of hell!

Well might David say, "O that men would praise the Lord for his goodness, and declare his wonders unto the children of men."

I hope the dear Lord has been pleased to make you rejoice with me that do rejoice, for I know you weep with those that weep.

March 6, 1842.

A. J.

A LETTER FROM MR. HUNTINGTON.

Messrs. Editors,—I beg to hand you the following letter, hoping it may be blessed to the readers of the *Gospel Standard*, particularly those who are distressed, and who labour and are heavy laden.

I am, yours in covenant mercies,

A. N.

Sister Mary, the elect lady, or rather the mourning dove in the cleft of the Rock,—Since my departure from you, I have had many thoughts of, and put up many petitions for you and your friendly family, and have felt a desire to send thee a few lines, being mindful of thy tears and of thy soul trouble, which makes thee a woman of a sorrowful spirit.

I could wish my God to bless these few scraps, and attend them with a little of the new wine of the kingdom, for thy stomach's sake and thine often infirmities, the plague of the heart, the confusion of the head, fits of unbelief, love sickness, disorders of jealousy, the leprosy, together with the aptness of breeding souls and of the daughters of Zion, especially when in a state of pregnancy, to long for one delicate morsel or other that is either sweet, savoury, or tart; such as a slice of the fatted calf; a little bit of lamb roasted in the fire without bitter herbs; a little honey from the rock and honeycomb, which is sweet to the soul; an olive berry from the uppermost bough; the first ripe cluster, with a blessing in it; the mandrakes which give a good smell; a little sincere milk from the red heifer; a grain of the oil of joy, and a cruse of water from the well of Bethlehem; a little pot of hidden manna; a little savoury meat; a small cake cooked under the juniper tree; a bit of broiled fish from the sea of Tiberias; a slice of unleavened bread; a word of grace, seasoned with salt; a dry morsel where love is; spiced wine of the juice of the pomegranates; balm of Gilead; nuts, almonds, and the first ripe figs. Many

such sweet scraps of picking meat do poor souls fancy and long after, when in a state of pregnancy, and especially if they have a hard and long labour in the casting out of their sorrows, fears, and torments. In such cases, it is impossible to deliver them without giving them their fill of the sweet morsel longed for, which, in the general, is a cup of dying love. And if they have this, they are sure to mark the new-born babe with it; and when it grows up, everybody may see it; "Come not near any man upon whom is the mark." (Ezek. ix. 6.) His love is better than wine, Mary; it goes down so sweetly that it causes the lips of those that are asleep to speak. (Sol. Song vii. 9.) And we know that those poor souls who breed badly are often sick and squeamish, insomuch that the morsel they swallowed down they often vomit up again. (Prov. xxiii. 8.) There is no such thing as getting these ladies out of the straw without large draughts of new wine. "Eat, O friends! drink, yea, drink abundantly, O beloved!" If thou art reconciled to me, if thou lovest me, then "eat, O friends!" Aye, that will do; this is charming fare; and here is a kind invitation and a hearty welcome. Now will I drink, and forget my poverty, and remember my misery no more. Go thy way, Mary; eat thy bread with joy, and drink thy wine with a merry heart; for thou art humbled, and God now accepteth thy works. Plenty of caudle goes about at the time of Zion's groanings. He opens the banqueting house, and his banner over us is love. Wisdom kills her beasts, slays and makes ready, mingles her wine, sends forth her maidens, and bids her guests, "Come, eat of my bread, and drink of the wine which I have mingled. Forsake the foolish, and live; and go in the way of understanding." (Prov. ix. 1—6.)

Fear not, Mary; Moses will accuse, perplex, terrify, and belabour thee, till thy soul is sick of his embraces; for it only genders to bondage, and brings forth fruit unto death. But when thou art divorced from him, Jesus will marry the widow, and raise up the name of the dead. Then, thy Maker shall be thine husband, and thou shalt forget the shame of thy youth.

My kind respects to the good man of the house and the rest of the family.

God bless you.

W. HUNTINGTON.

A LETTER FROM JOHN BERRIDGE.

Dear Sirs,—The following letter was written by the late honest Vicar of Everton to a Mr. Lee, at that time Curate of Lakenheath, from which curacy it seems the good man expected shortly to be dismissed by his vicar. The insertion of the letter in your useful work, it is hoped, will be the means of instructing and cheering those of the Lord's servants whose situation may somewhat resemble that of Mr. Lee.—Yours, &c.,

SENEX.

Dear Sir,—“The Lord reigneth, let the earth rejoice.” Your vicar cannot remove you till his Maker and your Master says,

"Depart in peace." All your times and ways are in his hands. If it be for his glory and the welfare of his people that you should stay where you are, no vicar nor diocesan can remove you; but if he has other work and larger employment for you, he will call you away, and you must give up Ishmael, as Abraham did for Isaac's sake; and Ishmael, though given up by Abraham, shall not be deserted by the Lord, but become a nation. (Gen. xxi. 13.) I love the people much, and left my heart in Lakenheath church and chapel, in the house and pantry, when I took myself away. If you can only be quiet, and daily commit yourself to the Lord, begging his direction and superintendence, all things will be ordered right, and end well: but if you stir a finger in the matter, you will be sure to disturb the Lord, and discompose your own soul. The Captain is now teaching his cornet how to stand still and see the salvation of God. A Christian soldier must learn to halt as well as march; one is as much a piece of exercise as the other, and can only be learnt by practice; preaching may show it, but cannot teach it. Then pray be still, and use no other weapon than the shield of faith. If your vicar send you notice to quit your cure, look upon it as being direct from your Lord, and go in peace. When Jesus sent the devil to blow down Job's house, and slay his children, and plunder his cattle, Job did not rail at the instrument, but cried out, like a wise man, "The Lord gave and the Lord hath taken away, blessed be the name of the Lord." Yet Job lost more than sixty pounds by his disaster; he lost his all; nothing was left except a froward piece of furniture in his house, without a name, but not without a tongue, a very crooked rib, and much unlike yours. And what was the end of Job? Twice as much as the beginning. My advice, then, is this; do not expect to leave Lakenheath till you have actual warning to go. Clouds will often gather in the lower regions, and move over our heads without wetting our feet; but if a storm falls Jesus sends it. Have you warning to go? Go in peace; rail not at the hand that writes your mittimus. Jesus employs very strange hands sometimes to do his work and to carry his message. Take heed of railing. Jude tells us that Michael durst not bring a railing accusation even against the devil himself, much less ought we against any of his servants. Are you discharged, and know not whither to go? So was Abraham, who went out not knowing whither he went; so must all his children. Be not anxious, be not fretful, be a little child, and your Lord will direct your paths. What *you* seek after will blight and wither. Where the Lord leads you he will follow you. This is strong meat, but very wholesome. The Lord will help you to digest it. I know not how to transport my bulky vessel to Lakenheath and back again in one week. As soon as the world beats a drum for arms, the Christian should fall upon his knees and not on his foes.

Give my kind love to your little dame and to all Christian friends, and believe me to be your affectionate friend and servant,

September 7, 1767.

JOHN BERRIDGE.

INQUIRY ANSWERED, OR THOUGHTS ON HEBREWS VI., 4, 5, 6.

It is plain that in the epistle to the Hebrews, like that to the Corinthians, the apostle kept himself on lower ground than when addressing the Churches of Rome and Ephesus; and that in order to arouse the people from their lethargy he advanced some most startling truths, and placed before them certain fearful facts. His object was to excite that salutary *fear* which instrumentally urges the soul onward, till she comes upon the solid ground of the "glorious liberty" of the new covenant; and thus he says, "Let us, therefore, fear, lest a promise being left us, of entering into his rest, any of you should seem to come short of it."

If we observe the connection of this passage, we shall find, in the close of the preceding chapter, that the apostle had been speaking of "first principles," which, in the first verse of this sixth chapter, he talks of leaving, just as the child leaves the first principles of his lesson book, when making due progress in his studies; and then, in order to show his meaning, the apostle enumerates *some* of those principles, showing that they *should not be laid again* as a foundation of spiritual instruction. These are, "repentance from dead works, faith towards God, the doctrine of baptisms, laying on of hands, resurrection of the dead, and eternal judgment." These are points which a natural man may come to, and cordially embrace. Now observe the connection implied by the word "*For*," which shows the apostle to be still upon the same ground. Above he had been speaking of *principles*, but now he is about to speak of the *effects* which their operation produced on the mind; and of these we treat respectively.

"*Once* enlightened." But, mark, not *twice* enlightened, as every child of God is, first by the letter, and then by the Spirit through the word; but once only; and this enlightenment is closely connected with the principle of "repentance from dead works;" and both these imply the action of the letter of the law, which points out every dead work, or immoral action. And let my reader strictly observe that we are not now speaking of the spirit of things, but of the letter; not of the experience *peculiar* to a child of God, but *that* only which a person may possess, and yet "fall away." The letter of the law is easy of comprehension to the natural mind, and it gives a moral light; and this light being received, the man is enlightened to know moral good and evil; and he finds that of the latter he is indeed guilty before God, and, therefore, like the Ninevites he repents, and like Ahab "he humbleth himself." He now puts away immoral conduct, and like the sow is washed from the mire. He escapes from the pollutions of the world, and the *unclean* spirit goeth out of him; and *externally* he looks clean, even as a child of God. And it is this change in moral conduct, which, in this evil day, passeth for regeneration. If a man be reformed, and joined to some religious sect, he is considered born again, and become a new creature. Converted he doubtless is, because he is turned about;

but regeneration is as far from him as the east is from the west. But just thus, all bastards are born again; for I conceive no man a bastard unless he be in the family—in the visible church; which, like Ishmael, he enters by being born after the flesh, after the will of man, and not after the Spirit. He is affected by the letter of a carnal commandment, and not divinely wrought upon by the power of an endless life.

“Have tasted of the heavenly gift.” How so? By virtue of the next first principle, “Faith towards God.” Like Magus, the man believes in God, through Jesus Christ, and thus takes his proper place as a branch in the vine of the visible church; and as Paul saith, he stands “*by faith*,” and if this fail (and it surely will, if underneath there be not a special—a saving faith,) he is again broken off, taken away, and consigned to the fire. Then the sheep’s clothing is torn away, he is thrust out of the fold, and delivered unto Satan as his own rightful property. By this fleshly, shadowy faith, the seed takes root in the stony ground, but it brings no fruit to perfection. As an *external* it is proper in its place, but it has nothing about it spiritual, durable, or substantial.

“Were made partakers of the Holy Ghost.” Yes; and the laying on of hands was the instrument of this. It is clear that many have partaken of the Holy Ghost, who were never made new creatures by his operation; but, then, it was of gifts only for the edification of the *visible* church: the gift of healing, of tongues, of prophecy, of miracles, and of casting out devils. Balaam had the gift of prophecy, and so had Saul: the former saw the Almighty, and the latter received *another heart, and became another man*. And though this, like the passage on which we are speaking, is a strong-hold of Arminianism, yet was it only common to outer-court worshippers. Ahithophel went very far in these spiritual attainments; (for they are called “*spiritual* gifts;”) he possessed such wisdom, that his counsel was as though a man had inquired of God. Judas, also, so far possessed the power of the Holy Ghost as to be able to cast out devils: and so have many others; as we read, “In thy name have we cast out devils.”

“And have tasted the good word of God;” that is, have so believed all the general statements of truth as to be affected by them. Not only possessing the confidence—the firm, but vain confidence of personal safety and salvation, which I may well call a dead “full assurance of faith”—but also a lively interest in all the grand prospect of the church, as foreseen through the glass of the written word. Look at Arminians, how confident, how sure they seem; at the Plymouth brethren, how they plunge into the future, and with delight taste the sweets of unfulfilled prophecy. But here is no bottom—no rock—no tasting the ineffable sweets of unconditional promises, through the energy of the Comforter, by which we become “partakers of the divine nature.”

“And the powers of the world to come.” What are these? Two of the chief, doubtless, are those named by the apostle above, when he saith, “The resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judg-

ment." These are two of the grand objects in the prospect of those who believe the letter of the word; and more or less they affect the mind with *fear* and *hope*, by which we may be said to have a taste of the powers of the world to come. Eternal judgment is an object of terror to those who possess legal conviction, because they dread the result of being arraigned at the bar of Jehovah. When Paul "reasoned of righteousness, of temperance, and *judgment to come*, Felix trembled," and so far he had a taste of this future, fearful power. But when the natural mind begins to believe the letter of the promises, all of which turn on the point of faith in God, through Jesus Christ, "the *hope* of the resurrection of the dead" begins to animate the soul, and a measure of love (which yet may wax cold) begins to inflame the individual to a zealous activity, in what is considered the cause of truth; and such a one may give all his goods to feed the poor, and his body to be burned.

"If they shall fall away." And can they fall away? Nothing is more easy; for in all the whole system of the "beggary elements" of Moses' school there is nothing firm or durable. *There* are no "immutable things" to support the soul, and secure her from perdition. There is much legal life, but no eternal life; much informing truth, but no saving truth. Hence, though a man may, in externals, be the greatest saint that ever lived, speak with tongues of angels and men, work miracles, remove mountains, yet not having been wrought upon by the Spirit of the new covenant, he has no preservative against "falling away." In time of temptation, or persecution, such will fall away; and the temptation leading to this is generally of a nature so specious, that the tempted little think themselves already caught in the fatal snare of the devil: and it often lies couched in that precious doctrine on which the *delivered* heirs of promise love to feast. When Isaac is weaned, and begins to learn doctrine, then Ishmael is tempted to mock, and he mocks at the blessings of the new covenant; and thus he stands on the threshold, his hands are made strong, and riveted for ever, and he is "cast out, cast forth," and returns no more.

"For it is impossible to renew them again unto repentance." Why? Because they reject vital, experimental truth, and by so doing they do despite to the Holy Ghost, who worketh by the word; hence this divine Person no longer strives with their natural conscience, and the result is, that it becomes seared as with a hot iron, that so, though they now seek repentance carefully with tears, yet in their hardened, their sealed heart, sealed over to eternal reprobation, they can find no place of repentance. Thus given over of the Spirit, like "reprobate silver," it becomes impossible to renew them; and Satan now takes advantage of this fearful state, and enters, as into Judas. The unclean spirit now returns with seven others worse than himself, and though the house has been swept by the letter of truth, and garnished with spiritual gifts, yet is it still empty; there is no Spirit to lift a standard, and no stronger man to repel the murderer. Hence, the last state of this man is worse than the first. It would have been better for such a

one not to have known the way of righteousness, than now to turn from the holy commandment; for henceforth, whether he feel it or not, there remains nothing but a fearful looking for of judgment, and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries. Such a one has sinned the sin unto death, and his iniquity is greater than can be forgiven.

I would add much more, but I fear I am already too long to think of insertion in the *Standard*; therefore suffice it to say, that on the above ground, of a mere letter system of religion, stand the great bulk of professors in this awful day. Holding the form, they deny the power. Hence, we know the meaning of these fearful words, "*a falling away first*;" and that *by this falling* the oak shall be stript of these fair leaves, and the holy seed shall be left alone in the hour of temptation, which shall come like a blast from the Almighty.

Ropley, March 7, 1843.

W. C. P.

[Though the above piece is, we think, the best that has been sent us in answer to a former inquiry in our pages, most of the communications making the passage apply to the children of God, still it does not fully meet our wishes and feelings, and we, therefore, hope in our next number to insert some remarks of Mr. Huntington on the same subject.—EDS.]

THE WORK OF THE MINISTRY.

Dear Friend,—Yours I received, but have been so engaged that I have not been able to write till now. You will excuse me from entering into particulars, as I feel persuaded that if your feelings are of God, (and I hope they are,) all the men in the world cannot give you real satisfaction. The work of the ministry is a work of such importance, that a soul deeply and truly impressed with its solemn importance must have satisfaction *from God alone*, before he dare consider himself called of God to that momentous work; and to rush into it without divine authority, is awful presumption. I hope the dear Lord of the house will influence you to be much in prayer, and daily lay the case before Him who alone can satisfy your mind; and though, for wise ends, he may a while forbear, and send no satisfactory reply, yet to wait at his door, and sit at his feet, is the safest spot. Bless his holy name! there you may spread your case, again and again, without once apologizing for being troublesome.

If the friends with whom you meet feel willing and desirous for you to read a part of the good word of God unto them, and speak a little upon the blessed things therein contained, and you feel liberty of mind so to do, I cannot see that there can be anything wrong in so doing, if you are enabled to attend to it as in the sight and fear of God. But pray that the Lord will keep you near his wounded side, and low at his feet, lest Satan should puff you up; for we are poor wretches when in any measure left to ourselves.

It appears to me that a child of God may be useful, in dropping a few words to his brethren, in the name of the Lord, though he may not be called to the ministry; and, indeed, I have often seen a

blessing attend it; for there are diversities of gifts and differences of administration, and yet the same Lord.

But if the Lord has designed you for the work of the ministry, you have many rough winds to face, and many hot furnaces to pass through. Nevertheless, you have no cause to fear; for winds, waves, and fires are all at the control of your heavenly Father, and must work for your good and his glory. But God's ministers must not learn to preach as school-boys learn their tasks. Whom the Lord sends, he sends with the things they have tasted, handled, and felt of the good word of life; and, to accomplish this end, he puts them into such circumstances as to make them feel the real necessity of the truths; and then, in the riches of his grace, he makes manifest the truth in their consciences, as *sui*ted to their case, and freely given unto them. We know nothing, in reality, of any branch of divine truth, but only as we feel the necessity, suitableness, and power of that truth in our experience; and, just as this is the case, we are at a point in the things of God.

That you may be led by the everlasting Spirit of God, and live near him, in the exercise of real faith, is the prayer of yours, though unknown in the flesh, yet I can say of one spirit in the dear Redeemer,

Manchester, Oct. 14, 1814.

W. G.

EDITORS' REVIEW.

A Scriptural Defence of Baptism, as practised by those Christians called Independents. By Thomas Willett.—London: G. Berger, Holywell-street, Strand.

There is not a single truth in God's word which has not been opposed by some one or other. The very existence of a future state, the inspiration of the Scriptures, the resurrection from the dead, the Deity of the Lord Jesus Christ, atonement by his blood, justification by his righteousness, the personality of the Holy Ghost; in a word, every doctrine which is precious to those that believe has met with the strongest opposition from some quarter or other.

Need we wonder, then, if believers' baptism is not exempt from contradiction and opposition, though we willingly admit there is this signal difference between the baptismal controversy and others, that *good men* have been found in the ranks of its opponents? How, indeed, they could shut their eyes to what is so plainly revealed in the New Testament must ever be a matter of wonder to those who see it written there as with a ray of light, so that he that runs may read. But so it is; and it remains a fact, that both able men and spiritual men have contended against believers' baptism.

But among these able men and spiritual men we cannot class Mr. Thomas Willett, for indeed we can find neither ability nor spirituality in his little pamphlet. There is indeed no want of confident assertions and rash accusations; but such weapons little move those who look to the Law and the Testimony, and require scriptural proof and "the mind of Christ," as revealed in the New Testament.

But we will make a few extracts from Mr. Willett's pamphlet, that our readers may form their own judgment:

"Without wasting any more time by wandering from the subject in hand, I would come at once, and make an attack upon the citadel itself, as erected by the Baptist, and for the sake of clearness, and that I might be understood by both parties, I would take the following position, and

"First, endeavour to show that the Baptists are wrong in the mode of administering the ordinance of baptism.

"Secondly, that they are wrong in the subjects to whom the ordinance should be administered.

"Thirdly, that they are wrong in the things signified by the ordinance of baptism; and I think that these three points will embody the substance of the controversy between the contending parties, and if, with Scripture authority, I show that the Baptists are wrong in this threefold position, in vain will all the sophistry and carnal reasoning of men be brought against the testimony of God."

There is no lack of boldness here. An attack is threatened upon the very citadel itself; but all attacks are not successful ones, and many sieges have proved more fatal to the besieger than to the besieged. The haughty King of Assyria could boast, "With the sole of my feet have I dried up all the rivers of the besieged places." (Isa. xxxvii. 25.) But the word of the Lord was, "By the way that he came by the same shall he return, and shall not come into this city." (Jer. 34.) We are greatly mistaken if such an attack as Mr. W. threatens should shake the least battlement, much less sweep away the impregnable foundations on which believers' baptism rests.

But having seen the three batteries erected, our readers may be desirous to hear the first discharge of that artillery which is to level the Baptist citadel:

"First, I shall endeavour to show that the Baptists are wrong in the mode of administering the ordinance of baptism; but they think, we Sprinklers, (as we are termed,) are so prodigiously wide of the mark, that they will not allow sprinkling to be baptism at all, and that the ordinance of baptism cannot be administered but by immersing, plunging, or dipping; and yet they have not one single passage in the word of God to substantiate these vague notions; and I must be bold to state that there is not a solitary instance that any one was commanded to be baptized, or dipped in water; but I do find the plain statement of God the Holy Ghost (as plain as words can make it), that many were baptized *with* water. Here is the element commanded to be used in the administration of the ordinance—viz., water, and that this element is to be applied to the subject baptized; but the Baptists, by their cunning craftiness, have quite reversed the mode herein described, for the Holy Ghost hath, in plain words, solemnly declared, that they were baptized *with* water; but the Baptists say, 'No! but they were dipped in water.' Oh! what solemn trifling with the word of God! and let the child of God bear in mind that the blessed Spirit does not testify of one thing in one page, and contradict it in another; he does not say that they were baptized with water in one place, and then that they were baptized in water in another. Oh no! in Mark i. 8, John Baptist declares, "I indeed have baptized you with water, &c.;" and in the first chapter of St. John's Gospel, it again and again declares that he baptized with water. How those that are taught of God, with these plain declarations before their eyes, can unhesitatingly declare it is *in* water, is a mystery to me, and would be a greater mystery, did I not, in some little measure, know the depravity of the heart of man, 'which is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked.'"

How easily are confident assertions made, and how easily do they

bear down the minds of those who mistake assertion for argument, and statements for proof! Let us, then, examine Mr. Willett's bold declaration, "that *there is not a solitary instance* that any one was commanded to be baptized in water." Not a solitary instance, Mr. Willett? What do you think of this passage? "And were baptized of him *in Jordan*, confessing their sins." (Matt. iii. 6.) Was Jordan water? Aye, surely; and a somewhat more capacious baptistery than a pint basin, or a church font. If Mr. W. will turn to Joshua iii. he will find that Jordan was no little brook in which the baptized might stand up to their knees whilst the baptizer poured water upon their heads, as pictures in family Bibles, taken chiefly from Roman Catholic paintings, represent; but that it was a broad and deep river.

But again, we read of the blessed Redeemer, that "when he was baptized, he went up straightway *out of the water*." (Matt. iii. 16.) Now, if he went up *out of* it he must have been *in* it. And if it be said that the Lord Jesus stood partly in Jordan whilst John poured a little water on his head, we have a right to demand proof of this assertion. Do the Scriptures say so? does even ecclesiastical tradition record it so? Surely in the silence of Scripture, and when the testimony runs so strongly the other way, it must be great presumption to make such an assertion. We believe, for our parts, as firmly that Christ was immersed in Jordan when he was baptized, as that he was nailed to the cross when he was crucified.

But further, we read that "John was baptizing in Enon, near to Salim, because there was *much water there*." (John iii. 23.) Now why was "*much water*" needed if there was no baptizing *in* it? If sprinkling *with* water were sufficient, Jacob's well would have served as well as Jordan's river, and a bucket-full would have been an excellent baptistery.

But we have another passage. "They went down both *into the water*, both Philip and the eunuch; and he baptized him. And when they were come up *out of the water*." (Acts viii. 38, 39.) Why need they have gone down *into the water* unless for the purpose of immersion? And how does "*down into the water*" differ from "*in water*?" It is impossible to use stronger, clearer, and more decisive language than "*they went down both into the water*." And if it be said that the words might have been translated, "to the water," which they might, the question still arises, Why need they have gone "*to the water*" but for the purpose of immersion? Was the water brought to the eunuch, or the eunuch taken to the water? A little water brought by the servant who drove the chariot would have been enough, had Philip only sprinkled him.

But we now make an assertion which Mr. W. can ask some of his learned friends whether it be true or false, and that is, that in well nigh every passage where it is in our translation "*with water*," it is in the original "*in water*." It is so Matt. iii. 11; Mark i. 8; John i. 26, 31, 33.

And now what becomes of Mr. W's confident assertion that "there is not one solitary instance that any one was commanded to be bap-

tized or dipped in water?" And what are we to think of a man who first displays such an ignorance of Scripture, and then calls our obedience to the example of the Redeemer "a solemn trifling with the word of God," and the effect of the depravity of the heart of man?

But let us see how Mr. W. gets over this baptism of the Lord Jesus:

"But in what capacity did the dear Redeemer stand when he was baptized by John? I answer, as the great High Priest of our profession; and as the priests under the Levitical dispensation were initiated into their office by three baptisms, as the apostle saith in the Epistle to the Hebrews, ix. 10. The word *washings*, the learned tell us, should have been rendered *baptisms*, in reference to Leviticus viii.; in which chapter the priests are declared to receive three baptisms—the first, by water; second, by oil; and third, by blood; and, by carrying the less to the greater, we see that Christ, as a priest, received three baptisms—first, with water by John; second, by oil, the holy anointing of God the Holy Ghost; third, by blood—in his own blood he was solemnly baptized when hanging on the cross; and the mode of administration of these baptisms was not by immersion, but by washing, pouring, and sprinkling, as declared in the afore-named chapter. And so with Christ, I have not the least shadow of doubt that when John Baptist baptized his Lord and Master with water, that he applied the element to him, whether by washing, pouring, or sprinkling, is not revealed. And in his baptism by the Holy Ghost, was not the Holy Ghost poured out upon him, and that without measure? And when baptized in his own blood, did not it trickle down from every pore? and when hanging on the cross, from his head, his hands, and feet? And thus the baptisms of the priest set forth the baptisms of Jesus; so that there can be no argument drawn from the baptisms of Christ to support the Baptists in their views of the ordinance"

The baptism of the Lord Jesus always has been and always must be a great stumbling-block in the way of infant-sprinklers. The language of the Holy Ghost is so decisive that the great High Priest of our profession was immersed in Jordan, that it cannot be denied, though it may be evaded, as Mr. W. has attempted to do. And if it be once seen by the eye of faith that the Head and Husband of the church was immersed there, the true-hearted disciple will look at his example more than the traditions of men. But we do not believe that "the washings" spoken of Heb. ix. 10, had any reference to the putting of the blood upon the tip of Aaron's right ear. There is not the least connection between putting a drop or two of blood upon the tip of the right ear and washing. The "washings" spoken of by the apostle refer, we believe, to the washing of the high priest's body on the great day of atonement, to which the apostle is specially alluding in that chapter, as is evident from verses 7, 11, 12. On the day of atonement the high priest "washed his flesh in water" twice, (Lev. xvi. 4, 24,) first *before* he put on the linen garments, and secondly *after* he had put them off in the sanctuary, in order to put on the holy garments for glory and beauty. The person also that let go the scape goat, and he that burnt the skins and the flesh of the bullock and of the goat for the offering, both washed their clothes, and bathed their flesh in water. (Lev. xvi. 26—28.) It is to these washings on the great day of atonement that the apostle evidently alludes, and not to the ceremonies whereby the high priest was consecrated to his solemn office. His arguments have not the

least reference to the consecration of the high priest, but to the sacrifices that he offered, and more particularly to the sacrifice of the bullock and the scape goat, and the taking of their blood within the vail on the great day of atonement. Mr. W. evidently is quite ignorant of the scope and meaning of Hebrews ix. and x. And admitting that the word Hebrews ix. 10, might have been rendered "baptisms," which it certainly might, this only the more proves immersion. When Mr. W. washes his hands, we presume he dips them in the water; and when he sends his linen to the wash, he would not like, at least we should not, if it were only sprinkled with as much water and in the same way that he sprinkles infants.

Nor do we believe that Christ's baptism in Jordan merely represented the outward sufferings of the Redeemer upon the cross. His outward agonies were but a small part of the weight of woe. The waves and billows of God's wrath that rolled over his soul, and which immersion so powerfully represents, were the chief of the Mediator's sufferings. Nor were a few drops only of divine wrath sprinkled upon him, but as he speaks, Psalm lxi., "The waters came in unto his soul;" and he came "into deep waters, where the floods overflowed him." But what a poor miserable figure is sprinkling of this baptism of suffering that he was baptized withal! How a spiritual man can believe that the baptism of suffering wherein Christ was baptized (Luke xii. 50) was merely "in his own blood, when it trickled down from every pore," is indeed to us a mystery. One thing is very plain, that he never could have any "fellowship of the sufferings of Christ" thus to limit them.

But before we quit this part of our subject, we will make another assertion, which we do with the fullest confidence, that the word "baptize" means to immerse, dip, or wash, and never means pour, or sprinkle. Therefore in every place where literal baptism is spoken of, the word should have been translated dip, or immerse. It would then thus read: "I dip in water." (John i. 26.) "In those days came John the Dipper." "And were dipped by him in Jordan, confessing their sins." "And they went down both into the water, and he dipped him." This is the strict literal meaning of the word rendered baptize; and had it been so translated, much controversy would have been spared.

But we proceed to consider the second position of Mr. Willett. And let us see whether his second battery is a whit more powerful than the first, and whether it does not equally recoil upon his own head:

"Secondly, that the Baptists are wrong in the subjects to whom the ordinance is to be administered.

"And I beg my reader's prayerful consideration of this point, for on this head I wish to lay particular stress, because this is the point in which those that advocate believers' baptism so strongly confide, and, in their imagination, triumph over the infant sprinklers; for they say, none but believers are proper subjects for baptism, and that none but believers were baptized by the disciples or by Christ (that is, knowingly). Now, this position is either false or true; and if true, then all that I may bring in opposition to the sentiment must fall before it, like Dagon before the ark; but if false, it must, before the testimony of God, totter to its centre; for that must be a poor edi-

see that is erected upon the supposition of men, without one single prop from the Scriptures of truth to substantiate the building.

"I am bold to state that the practice of the Baptists is in direct opposition to that of Christ and his apostles. The apostles went forth as commissioned by Christ himself, (Matt. xxviii. 19,) 'preaching the gospel, teaching and baptizing.' Here baptism is recorded, under the inspiration of God the Holy Ghost, to be at the very beginning of Christianity—that no sooner than these divinely-inspired 'servants of the most high God' proclaimed the gospel of God, either to the Jews or the heathens, and they renounced their Judaism or heathenism, and acknowledged the Messiahship of Christ, than the apostles baptized them immediately with water, in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost—the persons thus baptized, indicating by their baptism (not that they were brought to believe to the saving of the soul, but) that they were desirous of being instructed in the things concerning the kingdom of God. Now this acknowledgment of the Messiahship of Christ, and that he was the Son of God, (Acts, viii. 27,) widely differs from that faith which is the gift of God, and that is wrought in the hearts of God's elect by the invincible power of God the Holy Ghost."

The Baptists do indeed assert that "none but believers are proper subjects for baptism;" and in so doing they have the strongest testimony of the Scriptures on their side. It is perfectly true that the test the apostles required was a confession that Jesus was the Son of God. But what was to be the root of that confession? Not a mere natural belief in Christ's Messiahship, but a spiritual faith in him. As Paul says, "With the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation." (Rom. x. 9.)

A more monstrous assertion we never heard or read by one professing to be a spiritual man than Mr. W. has here made, that the acknowledgment of the Messiahship of Christ made by those whom the apostles baptized, sprang only from natural faith, and widely differs from that faith which is the gift of God. Why, the Scriptures cut up such an assertion root and branch. The Spirit most positively testifies, "that no man can say that Jesus is the Lord but by the Holy Ghost." (1 Cor. xii. 3.) And the apostle John expressly declares, "Hereby know we the Spirit of God: every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God;" (1 John iv. 2;) and again, "Whosoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God, God dwelleth in him and he in God;" (15;) and again, "Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God." (v. 1.) Thus, this confession that Jesus was the Son of God was to the apostles a proof of regeneration; and in requiring it before baptism they plainly made regeneration a requisite for that ordinance. One would think that Philip's answer to the eunuch would for ever have settled the question what sort of faith the apostles required in the baptized: "If thou believest *with all thine heart* thou mayest." And to believe with all the heart is to believe unto righteousness and salvation.

But how clear the Lord's own words are: "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved." (Mark xvi. 16.) How undeniably does the Lord here connect saving faith and baptism together! But Mr. W. would put asunder what the Lord has so positively joined together. His head, surely, or his heart must be wrong thus to contradict the Lord and his apostles. So "Lydia's heart was opened,"

not her head enlightened, before she was baptized; and so the jailer at Philippi, when the word came home with power to his soul, "Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved," was baptized, "and rejoiced, believing in God, with all his house." Natural faith brings in no spiritual joy.

That there were tares among the wheat, and that ungodly men, like Simon Magus, crept in, is most true; but that by no means proves that the apostles required merely an outward letter faith in the Messiahship of Christ. Baptism was most certainly a door of admittance into the church; and can we think that the apostles would fill their churches with unregenerate professors? The epistles addressed to the churches plainly prove that they consisted of "saints," "beloved of God," "faithful (or "believers") in Christ Jesus," "faithful brethren," "elect strangers," "new-born babes," &c. Nothing can be more monstrous than to assert that Paul, who contended so for power, would have baptized and admitted into the church mere nominal professors of Christianity. Such an assertion strikes at the very root of the gospel as a spiritual dispensation. The church of Christ is an assembly of believers, not a congregation of nominal professors of Christianity. Peter writes to the churches as "an holy nation, a royal priesthood, a peculiar people, called out of darkness into God's marvellous light." Thus, not only have we decisive proof from the express language of the Holy Ghost that "Whosoever believed that Jesus was the Christ, was born of God," and therefore, being baptized on that profession, was baptized as regenerate; but the whole of the epistles being addressed to regenerate characters, affords additional and undeniable evidence to the same point.

But the Independents, whom Mr. W. so zealously defends, are not consistent even with themselves. Admit for a moment that a nominal acknowledgment of Christ's Messiahship is a sufficient prerequisite for baptism, do the Independents require even as much as this? Do they not baptize (as they call their sprinkling) infants, a few days or weeks old, who cannot possibly make any such profession? Thus they stand condemned out of their own mouth. Mr. W. evidently does not understand his own side of the case. Baptism by immersion is a distinct question from infant sprinkling. The Church of England, that grand pillar of infant baptism, expressly commands the child to be dipped in water. But Mr. W., in his zeal against believers' baptism, has confounded two distinct questions, and thus shown his ignorance of both.

We think we need hardly pursue the subject further. A poorer defence of infant sprinkling we never read. More confident assertions and weaker arguments we never remember to have seen. And as to its being an answer to the Letters on Strict Communion, &c., which appeared in our pages, it is no reply at all. Not a single argument is taken up and answered. Indeed, the author says, p. 13, "Strict communion we admit, approve of; maintain and advocate that none but baptized persons were admitted to the Lord's table."

Believers' baptism stands upon too firm a rock to be shaken by

such attacks as Mr. Willett's; and though, where strong prejudices exist against that ordinance, men are glad to catch at any shadow of argument against it, let the Lord but once open the eyes to see and the conscience to feel the nature and power of his own divine institution, the cavilling of its opponents has no more weight than John Wesley's objections to election, particular redemption, and imputed righteousness, have on one to whom the Holy Ghost has revealed the glorious gospel of the grace of God.

POETRY.

"THE HEART IS DECEITFUL ABOVE ALL THINGS, AND DESPERATELY WICKED."

Alas! what tongue can speak my heart, Ye saints, who tread the gentler road,
Or all its sinful secrets trace? With lives unspotted all your days,
'Twould outdo each inferior heart, Say can my heart be right with God,
To form another half so base. Midst rocks, and waves, and unknown

seas!

Methinks should Satan lend his might,
And hell, enraged, its counsel join,
Their power, nor policy, nor might,
Can go beyond this heart of mine.

What! can a heart enslaved with sin,
For grace and pardoning mercy cry?
Can heaven-born principles dwell in
The chains of hell's captivity?

It rages like the mighty waves;
And but some narrow shores are found, Can clouds of guilt such darkness bring
Some dam, that all their force outbraves, Where heavenly light was wont to shine,
My hopes would sink beneath the ground. That I can scarce behold the Spring,
'That I could once believe was mine?

My wild desires no pen can paint;
None can describe their hellish choice: What! can a heart more hard than stone,
They hate all limits of restraint, And colder far than seas of ice,
And tempt the tempter with their voice. E'er burn with love to God's dear Son,
And long to melt in heavenly joys?

Though fallen angels must remain
Beneath the gulfs of direful woe, Can every poisonous, sinful bait
And gnaw their burning tongues with Claim some relation to my flesh?
pain, And dare I do the thing I hate,
They can't so much rebellion show. And crucify my Lord afresh?

They never loved a God in Christ;
Nor knew salvation full and free. What! can I war on Satan's side,
But I've seen Jesus as my Priest, And fight against the powers of heaven,
And knew his blood atoned for me. Meanwhile my heart is sanctified,
And saving grace its chiefest leaven?

Oft, on the verge of Egypt's land,
Forbidden sweets my heart ensnare; Can heavenly life survive in death,
I long to pluck, with strengthen'd hand, Where inward sins are hourly born,
The fruit that hangs so tempting there. And yet shall I, with dying breath,
Shout vict'ry through great David's horn?

And though that land is richly fraught
With every mortal bitter-sweet, Can saints, by quite opposing winds,
Yet, on survey, I've often thought Be driven far from a throne of grace;
There's not enough for me to eat. And can th'indifference of their minds
Be such no tongue can e'er express?

So headlong prone's my heart to sin,
Unsatisfied, yet most defiled, If these strange revolutions are
Strange! that a monster so unclean The indications of true grace,
Should yet be called a pleasant child! Rejoice, my soul! thy case is clear,
Thou'lt see the Saviour face to face.

Dec. 31, 1842.

S. E.

[We have been obliged to omit some stanzas, as well as alter and modify several expressions in the above lines, lest we should incur the charge made against us of considering strong expressions concerning inward corruption proofs of divine teaching.—Eds.]

THE
GOSPEL STANDARD,
OR,
FEEBLE CHRISTIAN'S SUPPORT.

"Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness; for they shall be filled."—Matt. v. 6.

"Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began."—2 Tim. i. 9.

"The election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded."—Rom. xi. 7.

"If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest.—And they went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch; and he baptized him.—In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost."—Acts viii. 37, 38; Matt. xxviii. 19.

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SATAN'S SIEVE.

(Concluded from page 167.)

In being sifted, the Christian discovers a disposition to sin because of the aboundings of God's grace. Now, I know that the child of God cannot sin in this way; but that does not prove that the devil will not tempt him so to do. If there is in the flesh a disposition to all that is evil, then there is a disposition to this evil also; yea, and I believe that some of God's children have indulged sin through this temptation.

But the Lord, in his sifting, sitteth by as a refiner, to manage the fire and that which is put therein. I am not quite sure that David was clear of this, in the case of Uriah the Hittite; but, then, the sword abode in David's house all the days of his life. I have felt something of this myself. I know the dreadful hand of the Lord in this respect. I can see how he has hanged my flesh by indulgences around my poor neck; and I know the effect it has many times when I am about to murmur at the cross. I am constrained to cry, "Lord, thou art righteous. Let iniquity be imputed to me and my father's house, and the King and his throne be guiltless." I know that this is the way in which the Lord has taught me to fear his great name, and many times to flee from sin as from the face of a serpent. Under a consciousness of past offences, I often weep and mourn; and when sin offers itself, I am constrained to run to Him for relief whose presence awed Joseph when he said, "How shall I commit this great wickedness, and sin against God?"

But the Lord sees the difference between the temptation of Satan

and that which is voluntarily indulged in of our own free will. Then the child of God appears to himself, in some good measure, what he really is, and the Lord's goodness and mercy are truly prized. He sings with David, "Lord, how I love thy righteous law!" Satan is truly gratified at the deep anguish the soul frequently passes through; and if in these seasons he can gain any advantage over the poor soul, if he can discover any open, manifest transgression, so that the daughters of the uncircumcised can triumph, he turns this to the stumbling of the weak, and to the emboldening of the mere professor; yet the Lord shall defend his own cause and his own servants, for he will pardon those whom he has reserved, although they cannot easily pardon themselves. In all this there is some sweet instruction which they could never have reaped in any other field; and this, when sanctified, shows to the child of God the Lord Jesus Christ in his true character, as the King of kings and Lord of lords; that he is the eternal, self-existent I AM; and that in our very nature the Godhead and the fulness thereof dwell bodily, according to the good pleasure of the Father, by its being united to the Second Person.

In this sifting we are taught not to be ignorant of Satan's devices; and although there be no ability to explain it to others, yet the Christian feels an inward consciousness of the effects of being thus tried, even as gold and silver is tried, and this is all traced up to the prayer of Christ, "I have prayed for thee." This brings me to my next proposition.

IV. The *prayer* of Christ. Some might say, that since Christ is not upon earth in his bodily presence, how are we to know that our enjoyments are the fruits of his prayer? To this the Christian will reply, "I know that they are the effects of something independent of myself, for when left alone, I was full of confusion, darkness, bondage, misery, and distress, and all my religion seemed completely deluged; nay, even the thoughts of former mercies could not ease or calm my mind. I was filled with blasphemy, like brother Peter, and in the same sieve I cursed and swore inwardly, wishing that I had never made a profession, for then I might have had a little peace in this world, if I had gone to hell when I died. Therefore, it must be some sovereign power, without any aid of mine, that raised me up out of the horrible pit of destruction; and though it was an unknown hand that brought relief, and, at that time, in an unknown way, yet, being delivered and brought up out of the pit and clay, I can perceive the friendly looks of my dear Redeemer, and am more firmly convinced that it is Christ than if I had heard the sound of his voice in an earthly way." These sweet manifestations draw the affections toward the dear Immanuel, and fill the soul with strong desire to be folded up continually in his lovely embraces. The intercession of Christ insures the final victory of all those for whom he is engaged. Not that we are to suppose Christ praying formally to his Father, or having any kind of doubt or fearful subjection; but we are to understand, that as prayer is the earnest pleading of our wants before him,

so Christ's prayer conveys an expression of his desires as the Mediator, having undertaken our cause and made it his own. We are told that "he shall see the desire of his soul, and be satisfied;" and "by his knowledge shall he justify many, for he shall bear their iniquities;" so that all the other part of his work must be destroyed if he did not make intercession for the transgressors. But now the cause is Christ's own, and ours in him, and sure I am, that, but for the prayer of Christ, or his interference in bringing the many sons into glory, no poor sinner would ever have attained the blessedness of God's kingdom. Christ being the Captain of our salvation, he orders the battle, marshals his soldiers, and attacks the enemy, by conveying his own grace into our souls; as it is written: "I will pour out upon the house of David, and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications." And again: "The Spirit maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered." It is to be understood, also, in connection with this prayer of Christ, that he dwells in the hearts of his saints; for it is written: "Christ in you the hope of glory." If we rightly understood these things, we should come boldly to the throne of grace, and pour out our complaints before him. Thus we learn to whom belongs the glory of the victory obtained over the world, the flesh, and the devil. The union of our persons to the Person of the Son of God causes a sympathetic feeling between the Head and the members; for "He is touched with the feeling of our infirmities." (Heb. iv. 15.) What sensible sinner, then, need despair of finally conquering? If we were truly and sensibly affected with the love of Christ, and thoroughly convinced of his determination to bring us to his kingdom, should we not, like Moses, choose rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season? The Christian, through the enjoyment of his fellowship with Christ, is made an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile. The glorious doctrines of the gospel are much obscured in this day of great and awful profession. Novelty in doctrine, something new in the ministry, with worldly advantages, are more general than sterling Christianity; but nevertheless, God has his witnesses, even in this Sardis. It is possessing a felt union with Christ, both in his sufferings and in his prayer, which constitutes a real Christian. Christ says, "I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not;" and this shows that the Christian's triumph is not by watchings, nor by prayers, nor by repentings, nor by attendance on the means, as it is called, nor by churches, but by faith. Not but that the Christian is led to try all these means; and they all have their proper office. But faith is that which getteth the victory, because it is the work of true and genuine faith to leave one's own self as a dead carcase, and to mount above all the terrors of the law of God, and above all the temptations of the devil, and to seek for support in another and a better world, even where Jesus is. And it is the business of faith to make over all the wretchedness of one's own self to Him upon the cross, (in which Paul declares himself crucified,) and to take the virtue of Christ

out of him, as if it were one's own virtue. Now faith alone can accomplish this; therefore Christ says, "that thy faith fail not." Faith may be, and is, shut up, but can never fail, because Christ, who is the spring of faith, cannot fail; therefore he is said to give more grace, for he resisteth the proud, but giveth grace to the humble. Now to the last proposition.

V. The *end* obtained. "When thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren." There are various disputes among men about this conversion. Peter was evidently made a partaker of Christ by the new birth, and gives a definition of his faith: "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." But conversion,* in this place, is the exercise of that grace which had been imparted at regeneration, therefore it is expressive of the expanding of that which was already rooted in Peter's soul. Christ knew that Peter would gain by trading, and told him in this indirect way for what cause these things must come upon him. He had said, "From henceforth thou shalt catch men;" but in this he seems to imply, "From henceforth thou shalt instruct men;" and if we examine Peter's epistles we shall see some of the fruits of the sieve. The dead men who preach the doctrines of grace may be instrumental in affecting others with the same truths, as they are the truths of God; yet no one can possibly enter into the trials and exercises of the children of God except they have experienced similar things. The person whom the Lord sends to feed his lambs must be acquainted with his message by passing under the rod himself. The ministers of Christ, like Paul, are often, as it were, appointed unto death, and are made a spectacle to God, to angels, and to men. The ministry of the word is no pleasing thing to flesh and blood; and if the ministers were not something like their beloved Master, whose reward was with him and his work before him, it would be little short of a case of condemnation to be a minister of the gospel. Witness a man raised up of God to preach the gospel, after having gone through all the severe pangs of a spiritual birth, and having suffered in the flesh; then to be sifted for the trial of his faith, and to be chastened and buffeted for the space of ten, fifteen, or twenty years; and then see him coming forth to preach the true gospel, which he has received from God, having to contend with a host of devils from the bottomless pit, and a world of incarnate devils, who continually blaspheme and ridicule. He has also a strong opposition from carnal professors and hypocrites; and then he may be settled in a part of the vineyard over a poor, afflicted, and perhaps fretful and rebellious people. Like Moses, his soul is often cast down, and he knows not what to do; he dare not be over severe with the people, for he remembers his own transgressions and is humbled. Besides all these trials, he is called to travail in birth, until Christ be formed in their souls; and when any of them are quickened, their infant cries distress his soul, and

* [We think that the meaning of the expression, "When thou art converted," is rather, "When thou art restored, or brought back" from thy state of backsliding into which Peter fell when he denied Christ.—Eds.]

the devil tells him that they will prove bastards, and their cries will end in a madhouse. All this is not very envious, but still strength is strength, and when such are strengthened to strengthen others there is a reward. Paul appears to have known what it was to be so disinterested at one time as to have no other motive to go forward in the work than a "Woe be unto me if I preach not the gospel." The minister is compared to an ox that treadeth out the corn. Commentators will not do for God's ministers if they have not a "Thus saith the Lord." They must know the mind of the Lord. "We have the mind of Christ," is the only satisfaction to all the Lord's sent servants. One "Thus saith the Lord" is of more avail in a tender conscience than all the authority of men put together. I have known what it is to labour hard in my soul for years together to obtain a satisfactory answer from God upon some point of doctrine, and when I have obtained and preached it, it has been offensive to the worldly wise and frozen hearted, and, through ignorance and prejudice, was objected to by some of God's own children. Being thus opposed, and the devil working hard to overturn my opinion, I have been tempted to give up the point, but divine authority, or truth melted into deep soul application by the Spirit of God, stands in the soul by the immortal power of Heaven, and, as the writing of the Holy Ghost, it may be spoken of in the language of Christ: "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my word cannot pass away;" and as the word of Christ is that which endureth for ever, it is upon the strength of this word that the effects of a gospel ministry wholly depend. Christ said to his disciples, "Ye are the salt of the earth; but if the salt hath lost its savour, wherewith shall it be salted?" I have known some ministers, professedly so, who have been tasteless and sapless upon this very spot. There has been a want of divine communication, so as to understand what the will of the Lord is; and in lieu thereof they have introduced a set of vague opinions big with error, which have suited the taste and fancy of some who follow after such things; but in them that saying of Paul is truly fulfilled, "They heap to themselves teachers having itching ears." There is no salt in the ministration of such men, and, consequently, there can be no savour or profit; they toil all day and all night, and take nothing. One would think that the confusion which generally exists amongst themselves might be sufficient evidence to them that all was not right. I have experienced error acting upon my soul like the cruel venom of asps, and I could never rest until I had vomited the poisonous draught. This conversion, then, is to know the mind of the Spirit in the word, and of this we can truly say, "Neither did I receive it of man, but in the demonstration and power of the living God. God will own his own truth: "Them that honour me I will honour; but they that despise me shall be lightly esteemed." It is therefore the strength of the ministry that is the strength of the church, for "God's strength is in the clouds." (Ps. lxxviii. 34.) The ministers are the glory of the churches and the excellency of Christ. I would say to all

who wish well to Zion, pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest to send forth labourers into his vineyard, and at the same time strengthen the hands of those that the Lord has been graciously pleased to send; consider them as men who watch for your souls, and as having to give an account of their stewardship; and pray that they may be enabled to do so with joy, and not with grief.

Dear Christian reader, if thou hast been in the sieve, thou art one that is hated by Satan and preserved by God; thou art acquainted with the depths of sin in thy own heart, and with the riches of God's grace; thou hast little desire to live in this world, except that Christ may be glorified; thou canst truly say, "For me to live is Christ; and to die is gain;" and thou art anxiously looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour the Lord Jesus Christ.

That the Lord may bless his people with much patience, and with the comfort of the scripture hope, is the prayer of, theirs to serve in the bowels of Christ Jesus,

Norwich.

G. M.

"THE HEART OF THE WISE TEACHETH HIS MOUTH."

Dear Friend,—May mercy, truth, and peace be with, guide, surround, preserve, and ever defend you. I have been writing to you in my mind for some time, but have been waiting for more light, and life, and love in the things of God and truth; but I find these come only by fits and starts, and are so short in their duration, that I am obliged to write just as I feel, being persuaded that you will not make a poor fool an offender for a word. I believe that God has taught you better than that. I cannot say that I am always happy in the Lord, and daily living upon the goodness, mercy, and loving-kindness of a covenant God; but I think I can say that in some little measure I am daily living to prove what a base, vile, helpless, ignorant, wandering, foolish, carnal, unbelieving, hell-deserving wretch I am; and I can truly say that I more and more feel my need of the quickening life of the dear Spirit to keep alive my soul; the drawing influence of the Spirit to move me God-ward; the upholding power of the Spirit to keep me from falling; the revealings of the Spirit, that I may know the things that are freely given to us of God; and the lifting up of the standard by the Spirit against the enemy, when he comes in like a flood, to enable me to shout victory. The precious free gifts of the Spirit, such as faith, love, hope, patience, humility, prayer, thankfulness, godly fear, and every good and perfect gift must come down from above into my heart before they can flow out unto God. I am as confident of this as I am that there is a God; and I am as sure that there is nothing can go to God out of my heart but what comes into it *from* God, as I am of my own existence. When I am happy in the Lord, is when I am enjoying the presence, the love, and the smiles of my covenant God, which is only now and then. When I am brought to a complete stand,

and just ready to give up all for lost, crying out, "Is his mercy clean gone for ever? and will he be favourable no more? Hath he in anger shut up his tender mercies?"—when I am brought to this point, he speaks a loving word to my soul, and bids me fear not, assuring me that he is my God, and will guide me even unto death, and afterwards receive me into glory. My friend, this is enough; I want nothing but the presence, love, and smiles of my God enjoyed in my heart, enabling me to sing and say, "My Beloved is mine and I am his." I am then happy in the Lord, and can walk with him, talk with him, and commune with him; all is right both within and without, backward and forward, on the right hand and on the left. I can then say as boldly as anybody, "I will trust in the Lord and not be afraid; though thousands set themselves against me, in the name of the Lord I can run through them all." There is no slavish fear in the love and presence of a covenant God. I am astonished that ever the Lord should favour such a worthless worm with one look of love, so very unworthy am I of the least of his mercies. O the sorrow and grief that my sins cause me to feel! I have such awful departings from God, and such devilish workings in my mind, that I am sick of self, and feel a nuisance to a dunghill. But the greatest cause for my astonishment is that God should ever give me another visit of his tender mercy, in raising such a wretch again and again from the dunghill, and setting me amongst the princes of his people. My friend, this is grace indeed. How can I help exalting the sovereign, free, discriminating grace of the holy Trinity, and sinking the creature into nothing, when I am daily experiencing these ins and outs, and the sweet manifestations of his covenant love toward me? I cannot but speak of the things that my soul is daily seeing and feeling. If I am in the dark, groping for the wall, I must tell the people what poor, unbelieving, blind fools we are when God hides his face from us. When I feel nothing but death in my soul, I must tell the people what deathly wretches we are when the life-giving power and unction of the Spirit is not felt in the heart. When my soul sinks in the mire and clay, and I am led to cry out, "Let not the pit shut her mouth upon me," I must tell the people what despairing wretches we are when the mercy of God seems to be clean gone for ever, and it appears as though he would be favourable no more. When the loving-kindness of God is felt in my heart, and he turns my captivity like the streams in the south, I must tell the people what fools we are to distrust a covenant-keeping God, who can never forsake his people nor turn his back upon his inheritance, which he has purchased for himself. I can then take pleasure in speaking, in my little way, of the loving-kindness of my God, and I can truly say, to the honour of his dear name, that I have now and then seasons when his doctrine drops as the rain, and his speech distils as the dew. O sweet moments! humbling seasons! how it crumbles down my poor soul at the feet of the Lord! and O how delightful it is to hear his blessed words of peace and love! The Lord has been very good to me all the



days of my life, and especially so of late. I have had many tokens for good, more and more convincing me that he will never leave me nor forsake me. But when the light of his countenance is hid, and I am left to myself, you cannot think what a fool I am, notwithstanding all the sweet testimonies that my soul has had of his loving-kindness. The Lord sometimes appears so completely gone, that I seem as destitute of one spark of grace in my heart as if I were a beast, and I cannot help crying out, "I am as a beast before thee;" and such awful filthiness boils up within me, that my poor soul, in anguish and grief, exclaims, "Can ever God dwell here?" O my friend, my heart is so deceitful and desperately wicked that none but God can know its depths; and I wonder that God should suffer such a useless wretch to live upon the earth. I am surprised that my people have had patience with me for so many years. Whether you believe me or not, I can assure you that I have wept many times for the people who have had to sit under the ministry of such a blind, rebellious, stupid, worthless, ignorant fool as I am; yes, in my very heart I have pitied them, and have thought within myself, that neither God nor men could bear with me much longer, and that I should be made a spectacle to angels, men, and devils. But, honours be upon the head of my dear God and Saviour, when all my own strength is gone, he appears for me with another display of his mighty love, power, grace, and glory, and tells me to be of good cheer, and to be not afraid; and the moment he speaks, there is such a calm, that my soul stands astonished, not a devil is to be seen, nor even heard to whisper, and my poor soul sits at his feet melted like wax, and could gladly leave the world kissing his dear feet. O lovely, precious Jesus, who manifests such boundless love, mercy, and tender compassion toward such a wretch as I! His is such wonderful grace, such rich love and mercy, and is so strong and mighty, that all the floods of hell cannot drown it, nor death itself ever touch it. My soul knows this to be the truth, for I have felt the very pangs of hell in my soul, and have, in my feelings, sunk into the belly of hell, and have been constrained to cry out, "I sink in deep waters, where there is no standing," and I have verily believed that I was out of the reach of love; but even here my soul has proved that the everlasting arms were underneath me to bear me up; and my God has brought me through fire and water into a wealthy place; so that I am a living witness that his love is stronger than death, that many waters cannot quench it, neither can the floods drown it. And can I help extolling this matchless love? No, my friend, for the love of Christ constraineth me. So great has his love been towards me for so many years, notwithstanding my God-dishonouring ways, and so many miseries has he delivered me out of, that I cannot refrain from speaking well of the love, mercy, and kindness of our dear and ever-blessed Lord.

We are still preserved, as a church and people, in love and union, which I frequently feel to be a great mercy. I hope the Lord is with you, and blessing you with many tokens of his loving-kindness.

It is my desire that he will give you health and strength of body, that you may be enabled to go forth from time to time to blow the silver trumpet, for I believe you cannot but give it a certain sound.

That the Lord may direct your soul and mine into the love of God, and into a patient waiting for Christ, is the heart's prayer of your poor worthless brother in the Lord,

Trowbridge, Dec. 13, 1842.

J. W.

A MONUMENT OF GRACE.

Messrs. Editors,—At the age of fourteen I entered a gentleman's service, as foot boy, and afterwards lived in several large families of distinction. I drank deep into all the sin and folly which is too frequently practised in great families. In 1839, in the thirty-ninth year of my age, I was living butler in a gay family in the North Riding of Yorkshire, where I had been ten years. My master was the brother of a noble lord, and my mistress the daughter of a noble duke. Being at this time a tolerably moral man, I thought myself a good man, and regularly attended church and the sacrament. But, as I now believe in my soul, the set time to favour Zion was come. The Lord laid his afflicting hand upon me, by taking from me my wife, during child birth. As I was very much attached to her, this was a heavy blow. I wandered in the woods and fields, grieving, and asking myself what I had done that I should be so afflicted. My distress increased; and, for nearly four months, I tried to get rid of it, by going to public houses and frequenting company, but this made me worse. I could not sleep at night, but often got out of bed to pray, but to whom, at that time, I knew not. I became very weak, and my employers and fellow servants looked upon me as an object of pity, thinking that my grief was in consequence of my bereavement. But the arrow of conviction had entered into my soul, and I was driven almost to despair; crying, sighing, groaning, and praying, night and day. At length, on the 4th of August, 1839, (O, never-to-be-forgotten day!) while pacing my room, about ten o'clock in the morning, I heard a voice say to me, "Look unto me, and be ye saved," and, at the same moment, I saw Jesus upon the cross* as plain as I now see this paper before me. I can affirm that I heard the voice, saw Jesus, and felt the power; and the tears of godly sorrow which followed no tongue can tell or pen describe. I can testify to the truth of this scripture, "They shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and mourn." I knew my sins were all forgiven through Jesus Christ, and I exclaimed, "It is good for me that I have been afflicted." At this time the parable of the prodigal son broke in upon my soul with almighty power, and I was feasted upon it day and night for a fortnight. I now began to preach Jesus in the house and amongst my neighbours. I thought I was going to convert many of them, and if they appeared serious I considered the

* We presume with the eye of faith. [Eds.]

work was half done. When the family was from home I got all the servants to prayer, but my mistress soon put a stop to that when she returned, but I continued to pray for them all, in my own bedroom, for hours together. O what a spirit of persecution did my childish folly bring upon me! My mistress cautioned the servants against listening to me, as I was gone mad. My master told me the servants were all complaining that they could not live with me, as I was always talking about religion, and charged me not to do so. I said I was sure that if I held my peace the stones would cry out. Out of fourteen persons in the house, the housekeeper and kitchen maid were the only persons who did not persecute me. I thought they were my converts. At this time all my sins passed before my eyes like a panoramic view, but I felt no guilt. I was now brought into contact with three clergyman. O how the devil raged in them; they called me insane, and told my master that I was gone mad. How these learned parsons did try to confound me with their Greek, Latin, and Hebrew, but all to no purpose, for my new Master gave me, a poor illiterate fool, words and wisdom which all their college wisdom could not resist. One parson asked me why I should flatter myself that God should have conferred such a favour on me more than my neighbours? I went to church a few times after this, and O how these hirelings did level their guns at me. I many times fell flat upon my face, in my bedroom, so astonished that God should enable me to stand fearless in the presence of these parsons and my employers, and put such words into my mouth to speak unto them.

I was next charged by a popish priest with driving one of his followers mad. He said that I ought to be sent to prison, and went to a certain catholic duchess, to get her to write to my employers, stating that I was mad and a dangerous character. The devil set on me in consequence of this hot persecution, but the dear Lord soon put all to rights with these words, "I have chosen thee out of the world, therefore the world hateth thee." Soon after this the dear Lord gave me these words, with great power, which followed me for several days, "Count the cost." I felt sure that some fresh trial awaited me, but the words gave me such support that I did not fear. But alas! I did not "count the cost," for my religion has cost me much more than I reckoned for. O, this stripping, inside and out, is painful to flesh and blood! In April, 1840, my master called me into his room; he told me that he was sorry to part with me, not having a single fault to find with me, except my new religion. I believe that my employers had some respect for me before the Lord called me, as the day my dear wife was buried, my master and mistress attended her funeral, and my mistress stood sponsor the same day for my dear baby, when the parson gave it the mark of the beast in the forehead. One trial I met with before I left the family, which was, the practice which is followed, in high life, of ordering servants to say the family are not at home when they are. This is what Mrs. Opie calls *white lying*, but, to my conscience, now made tender,

it appeared very *black lying*. My mistress having told all the great folks of her acquaintance that I was gone mad, they seemed half afraid of me when I opened the door. How my soul did pity them, in their fine carriages!

In May, my master discharged me, after eleven years' servitude, telling me at the same time I had turned his house and neighbourhood upside down. This scripture came to my mind with power, "They that have turned the world upside down are come here also." I said, "Sir, unless you know something of this turning upside down before you die, where God is you cannot come." I now left the Church, and joined the Primitive Methodists, or free-will ranters, and so jumped out of the frying pan into the fire, for they set me to work for Christian perfection, and to convert the whole world, yes, even the reprobate part. I bless the Lord he soon brought me from amongst them. At this time I thought all who could talk about religion were religious, and so used to cast my precious pearls freely before swine. I now began to be much concerned about my father's soul, and a very popular church parson set me to work to pray for him, saying that God heard the prayers of a son for a father. O, the hours I prayed for him! but alas! he is now eighty years of age, and, I fear, dead in sin.

From August, 1839, to December 1840, I enjoyed much of the dear Lord's presence, and many sweet seasons in prayer, both public and private. But now came the weaning time. One night, when I went to bed, I enjoyed the Lord's presence in prayer, but when I awoke the next morning my best and dearest friend was fled, and left an aching void, which the world, or all that man calls great or good, can never fill. O, what distress of soul I was in! I was afraid that I was deluded. I tried to pray many times a day but could not. I had just commenced business, but my distress of soul was so great that I could not attend to it. I sought out many professors of religion, of different denominations, but none of them understood my complaint. I went to two Baptist preachers, and told them my distress. One of these men told me to exercise faith, and to look out of myself unto Christ; the other asked me if I prayed, and when I told him that I tried to pray twenty times a day but could not, he said, "You give place to the devil, and it is written, 'Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.'" Thus the devil, in these blind guides, makes use of scripture to distress a poor soul. I thought, as they were preachers, that they must be right, and myself a deluded character. I was next induced to join a class of professors conducted by the before-mentioned popular Church parson. I attended twice, but found only "death in the pot." I knew not what to do, and as I could find no religious professor who understood my complaint, I thought there never was any one like me. It now came into my mind that, four or five years before, I heard of an old acquaintance, a sailor in his early life, who it was reported had gone mad in consequence of religion, and had become a preacher. I thought that perhaps his madness was something like mine, and I endeavoured to

find him out, which I soon did, and fell into conversation with him about religion. Indeed I could talk on no other subject. He seemed to eye me with a jealous look, but when I told him my distress of mind, and he heard my suppressed sighs, he said, "I am glad of your soul trouble; I have been in it myself; these are the trials and straits which all the Lord's people are brought into." I found that this poor old sailor understood my complaint, and I felt a union to him. He then began to explain the difference between law and gospel, which I had never heard before, but when he spoke about the doctrine of election, and the safety of the elect, I got out of his company as soon as I could, ran home, and, upon my knees, in my bedroom, I besought the Lord to keep me evermore out of his company, so awful did the doctrine appear to me, but from him I could not keep. Every time he spoke of empty professors, (as I did not think then that there were any) and election, I ran home, praying to be kept from him; yet I loved the man. At length the dear Lord made matters right with these two portions of his holy word being applied with power, "Every imagination of the thought of the heart is evil, and that continually," and "I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me." The first cut up all my duties, and showed me they were nothing worth; the latter convinced me of the truth of the glorious doctrine of election, and of the security of the elect.

I desire to praise God the Father for choosing me, a sinful worm, before time; I desire to give equal praise to God the Son for redeeming me; and also to the blessed Spirit for quickening me. I bless the dear Lord for using this poor old sailor as an instrument in removing that heavy burden from my heart, which had so long oppressed me. When I was first called I thought I should have gone smoothly to my grave, but the Lord the Spirit has, in some measure, taught me the plague of my wretched heart. As to the Lord's dealings with me in Providence since my call by grace, my path has been much crossed in all I have put my hand to; my way is hedged up on all sides, and, in fits of rebellion, darkness, and unbelief, I often say, "All these things are against me." Many have been my days of darkness, and often has the devil presented to my mind poverty, a prison, and a workhouse. I do indeed feel myself a poor, blind, ignorant fool, but at the same time there is a secret something which sweetens all my cares. I was soon led to see that believer's baptism was a divine command, and I desired to add my feeble testimony in defence of that much-despised ordinance. The dear Lord met with and blessed my soul while obeying his commands, so that I found that "to obey is better than sacrifice," and "in keeping his commands there is great reward." I am now joined in church fellowship to a very few, very poor, much despised, and persecuted people, the old sailor being one of the door-keepers.

May the God of Jacob bless you in your labour of love, and enable you to lift up the *Gospel Standard*.

So prays yours in truth alone,

Feb 21, 1843.

J. W. T.

SALVATION IS OF THE LORD.

My dear Cousin,—Upon receiving your letter, and reading its contents, I felt constrained to say, "What hath God wrought!" Little did I think, when I last saw you at our house, what the Lord was so speedily about to accomplish, by the power of his grace and Spirit, on your soul. What a proof that nothing is too hard for the Lord! When I used to look at, or think, or speak of you, I considered you possessed of every natural and mental qualification to fit you for business, society, and the affairs of this world, but destitute, at that time, of the "one thing needful."

What a distinguishing, sovereign display of mercy and grace has been manifested in plucking you as a brand from the burning, (1 Cor. ii. 6,) in stopping you in your career, which though not of open transgression, yet as carrying you on with the stream of this vain world, was equally dangerous; for the gulf of ruin and perdition is the same to professor and profane. There is no difference in the sight of God; sin is sin; "the soul that sinneth it shall die;" and "he that is guilty in one point, is guilty in all." Therefore, we are all under the curse; all deserve eternal death; and all would certainly perish, were it not for the almighty power and grace of God, put forth in the conviction and conversion of the sinner from death to life, from the power and love of sin and Satan to Himself. Hence, it is said, "Salvation is of the Lord;" (Jonah ii. 9;) "Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord of hosts;" (Zech. iv. 6;) "Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." (John i. 13.)

You have cause indeed to bless the Lord for singling you out, while so many, on the right hand and on the left, are passed by, and given up to the hardness and impenitence of their hearts.

There is one sentence in your letter that particularly struck me; it was, that your greatest difficulty was to throw away all hope in yourself, and come to Jesus as a lost, ruined sinner. If this is indeed your experience, (and I have no reason to doubt it,) I would say, that is one good evidence of God's work in your soul, and I can subscribe to such a testimony as the apostle gives in Phil. i. 6, "Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ."

I believe that there is a possibility of a person being deceived upon every other point but this, viz., that of being brought to the feet of Jesus. (Luke viii. 35.) I am persuaded that a person may learn and imbibe all the notions of religion, and yet be destitute of that experimental teaching of the Holy Spirit which lies at the root, and is the beginning of all real godliness; and which is, in fact, turning a man inside out, exposing him to his own view, and then bringing him to Christ alone, as his only Saviour, hope, refuge, and hiding-place.

As the Lord leads you on, you will be increasingly, yea, unceasingly, coming to the cross of Christ. Hence, he will become very precious to you in his person, blood, and righteousness, as all

your salvation and all your desire; He will become your centre, your happiness, your all.

From the contents of your letter, I consider that the Lord has done great things for you already; and I would join with you in magnifying his holy name.

O! what upon earth can be compared to the saving knowledge of Christ? It is life eternal, to know him. How enriching, ennobling, sanctifying, and satisfying! It is that tree of life that yields its fruit every month; it is the sovereign antidote against the love of sin and the power of it; it carries its possessor above the world, in its cares, pleasures, maxims, company, and spirit; it distinguishes, separates, and brings him out from all evil, conforms him to the image and likeness of Christ, and controls him to a willing, cheerful obedience to the word. In short, what cannot grace effect? It has done, and is doing, wonders. O that you and I may be enabled to walk under its influence, and go from strength to strength,

"Till each in heaven appears,"

to crown Jesus "Lord of all."

I am not surprised at your wishing to die. I hope it will be my lot first. You have but just entered the wilderness; just been brought out of Egypt. You will have to learn your exercise, the use of the armour provided, and what are the enemies of your soul; but fear not; as thy day is thy strength shall be. Hallelujah! Amen.

Yours in a new relation,

Chertsey, Feb. 4, 1836.

C. S.

"HE IS IN ONE MIND, AND WHO CAN TURN HIM?"

It is indeed, my brother, a mercy of mercies that our God is of one mind, and none can turn him. I do see myself a lost man if he can alter. I often find it a prop in some of my soul-sinkings when helped to think on his immutability, for, if he was, he is, and ever will be mine in unalterable bonds; but I am frequently where I cannot feel him to be mine, nor yet see that he ever has wrought a good work in me or for me; and although I am not content in such a place, yet I have not strength enough to struggle myself out of it. I seem to have all sorts of fears and doubtful disputings, yet they seem not weighty, and I carry them along without complaining. I still often am light, and vain, and heedless, and often fall into mischief. When I was a lad, mischief was my constant work, and as soon as, or before, I had done one job, I was at another. I was often detected in my wicked proceedings by some one or other, and then my troubles began; but as soon as the rod was out of the hand of him who used it, they were at an end. Indeed I think I got about as much beating as any ass in the wilderness; and, to my shame, I am now worse, more stupid, contrary, stubborn, self-willed, ignorant, and shockingly brutish. Ah, my brother, broken bones, broken teeth, feet out of joint, eyes put out, darts entering my liver,

the stocks, the irons, the chains, the prison, and many other things, are the legacy left me by my father Adam. I am often engaged with these stumbling stones, falling, and stumbling, but the dear Lord, who is my light and salvation, has never let me be utterly cast down or destroyed. His grace is great indeed; it does reign through righteousness unto eternal life. O the thousands of times he has caused his healing word to come with light and life, by which we have been quickened and solemnly reproved, and caused to debase ourselves before him; then he has given us repentance and remission of sins. Our confession is then hearty, for it is our dear Lord's own work; our prayer is real, it is in spirit, and in truth, and is felt; our praise is of the very best, sweet and comely; humility, meekness, tenderness of heart and conscience, love and zeal for the Lord, hatred and abhorrence of self come flowing in like a river, and all out of that stream which makes glad the city of God. O how my soul sings, "O that men would praise the Lord, for his mercy endureth for ever!" We do indeed love to be cleansed and healed by the living word; we are no longer then like the ass or the mule, but sweet tempered, loving, obedient children, well every way, and every way beautiful, chaste, and comely; but we are not left to rejoice in these sweet adornings, but in our dear Lord, our soul's sweet Bridegroom; for when he does manifest himself to be our unchanging, loving, faithful, merciful, powerful Friend, we gaze upon him until we are transformed into the same. We soon come to be less than nothing, and yet more than every thing, for Jesus is our all in all, and we are his fulness; he is our glory, and we are his glory; we are in him, and he is in us; our dear Immanuel is in us and in the Father; we are thus manifestly of the Father and of the Son. The great Father of our Lord Jesus Christ is our Father. Jesus is our Redeemer, and Brother, and Teacher, and every thing; and the most holy Spirit that proceedeth from both is our holy Sealer, Sanctifier, and Comfortor. Blessed be our ever-adorable Lord for ever and ever for making my soul and your's, by tasting, acquainted with the rich feast of his great love and grace. This is, I think, the white stone and the new name which none can read or understand but he that hath it. Our saving Friend bringeth all this to pass, and much more, in a few moments. He is our Brother, wonderful in counsel and excellent in operation, and he has by his operations many times astonished us both in providence and in grace. I was much pleased with your account of Mr. J—; but trouble, for their profit, must be realized by all the living family, and it will yield the peaceable fruits of righteousness for them that are exercised thereby, whilst those who are not chastened are bastards, and will perish in their sins, for God's unchangeable indignation is great towards them. I do feel that grace hath made me what I am, and by it I have often been refreshed. I hope the Lord will, in very deed, keep me sensibly poor and needy, and make me watchful and prayerful throughout the days of my vanity. Give my love to as many as

fall in your way that you have good reason to conclude are exercised to weep with them that weep, and rejoice with them that rejoice. My dear brother, do you know many who are exercised in weeping for the needy, the desolate, the distressed, and the discontented ones? There are some that love Zion, and they that love her are to prosper; there are some that shall grow up as the cedar and flourish as the palm tree; and there are some that are planted in the house of God that are to flourish in his courts, for Zion's welfare is in growing up and increasing with the increase of God. We are in a bad state if we hear of Zion's troubles, or see them, and do not feel our heart move with pain and grief; and if we do feel pained and grieved, he who is touched with all the feelings of our infirmities is resorted to, and his dear mind is made known according to, and by his word, and we are prompted to action. Let the case be what it may, if Zion is enlarged, we are indeed in a sad state if the heart do not say, "Blessed be he that enlargeth Gad." I hope that both you and I know a little about these things, and are happy in the doing of them.

May the dear Lord lead us into all truth so that they may be manifestively his children. Although my heart at this moment is heaving out, "My leanness, my leanness," yet it doth, rising up, witness to my face that I do indeed come very short in every thing unless it be in faults.

Yours in the best of bonds,

S. E.

THE ONLY FIRM GROUND.

My dear Sister and Companion in tribulation, and in a good hope through the grace that was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began,—I thank you for your letter. I have read it many times, and desire to bless with you our covenant God, who condescends to take such pains, and teach us such blessed lessons, in spite of our vile selves, our unwearied adversary the devil, and a bewitching and tormenting world. I can find, by your language, that you do not learn religion by smooth things. No more do I, nor ever shall. These lessons are only learned in the fire of tribulation. But what says our Master? "Be of good cheer; I have overcome the world." And in these words he includes all our outward and inward foes.

O, my dear sister, how often, when made sensible of what heaps of inconsistencies I seem full of, and feeling, as Hart says,

"He is not readier to deceive, than I to be deceived,"

these blessed words of our adorable Mediator have been applied with power and sweetness; "The prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in me;" "And ye are complete in him which is the Head of all principality and power." Here I find more and more the value of a covenant Head; while I learn, by little and little, what I am in and of myself; and I desire to bless God that he

does not leave me without my exercises, though God forbid that I should glory because of the evil that I daily feel, but because by these things he makes self more hateful, and his grace and free mercy more abundantly precious. Therefore, in this unchanging God alone have I hope; and I get into the experience of the text which Mr. G— preached from the last time he was in London. 2 Cor. iii. 12. Read the whole chapter. "Having this hope, we use great plainness of speech;" we come before the Lord as our covenant God in Christ Jesus.

Lord! I bless thee, and shall for ever, that thou hast not only chosen me from eternity, and called me to a knowledge of myself and of thee in this time-state, but that thou hast given me exceeding great and precious promises, and precious faith in thee for the fulfilment of every one of them; and now, O my covenant Father! I look to thee. I can do nothing without thee; I have no might nor wisdom. Thou hast promised to withhold no good thing. Make and keep me upright, utterly dependent on thee. Known to thee, and thee alone, are all my enemies, weakness, deadness, false confidence, sinful self, righteous self, a tempting and accusing devil, and a bewitching and despising world; and I know not how to express the hundredth part of the evils of which I am full. Lord, undertake for me; thou hast promised to perfect that which concerneth me. All I have and am, except sin, I have and am by thy free grace and everlasting love. Thou canst not forsake the work of thy own hands. Behold, I come unto thee; for thou art the Lord my God.

This, my dear sister, is firm ground, with plenty of room for the new man; but the old man sticks so close, and will have so much of his own along with him, that it causes daily and hourly distraction, if not especially restrained; and if grace was not sovereign as well as free, we should neither hold on nor hold out. But you may depend on it, that if we are thus exercised and made upright, (and I bless my God that, whatever others may say or think of us, these things, in his hand, are made the means of keeping us so,) we shall find that our common enemy, who works by prejudice, will have all the engines at work which he can find out; or, otherwise, we shall have it from sinner and from saint. And it is, as you say, an unspeakable mercy to be brought into sweet communion and enjoy such blessed nearness of access with our covenant God in all his Trinity of persons; and, as Hart says,

"Thus we the Trinity can praise," &c.

Here is no yea and nay, but all yea and amen in our blessed Jesus.

I can truly say with you that I desire to praise him that he has raised up our dear pastor, and blessed him as he does to the establishment of our souls. O that he may still go on to perfect that which concerns each of us! There is nothing to be found in the world, the church, our families, or ourselves, but misery and evil, except as our God is seen to reign; and what a mercy and support it is that we know that our God reigns above all, and is not unmindful of the least of us.

As for your fellow-servant, if she is not a possessor as well as a professor, it will be the means of lessening your cross if you are kept from saying too much to her; and as for the inconsistencies and extremes she may go to, if she see the difference in you, there may be no bounds to them. I had rather myself live with worldly people; but the bounds of our habitation are fixed. We only want living faith in exercise, and patience, which are among the needs of every day; and these are promised to be supplied; but, then, we are to have none to spare; and we are so silly that we do not know when we have got just enough. Mr. Romaine says, in his "Life of Faith," "It is the peace we are possessors of in Christ Jesus that the enemy is so enraged at, he spares no pains to bring us, by one means or other, into tribulation;" and I can say for myself that I never understood so clearly, or enjoyed so fully, the complete work of my Triune God in my everlasting salvation, as I have been brought to do by means of the exercises of the last two years. I hope and pray that I may never be suffered to forget or set lightly by such unspeakable favours, as in time past.

And now, my dear sister, I can truly say that I hope and pray for you that our dear Lord will abundantly bless and sanctify all his dispensations towards you, and keep you, by his almighty and gracious power, near him. Here alone is safety; and though in this safe situation we may often hear the devil roar, and feel him stir up all that is evil within us, to spoil our enjoyment, yet here again he overshoots his mark, and we come off more than conquerors, through him who hath everlastingly loved us. Farewell.

I remain, yours in Christian love,

M. S.

"THOU ART THE GOD THAT DOEST WONDERS."

My dear Friend and Brother,—I once more attempt to write a few lines to you, but feel at a loss for want of a fresh, warm, spiritual, and living subject; for I am at present feelingly afar off from the enjoyment of His presence, which, when felt by me, makes my heart rejoice, and does my soul more good than all other things in heaven and in earth. For his gracious presence comforts and embalms one's soul, healing both old wounds and new; and I am sure that could I feel it now, it would rid me of all my present complaints, such as blindness in my eyes, hardness in my heart, perverseness and stubbornness in my will, a grovelling disposition in the cares of this life, together with covetousness, fretfulness, and other things that I both see and feel in some measure, but cannot describe for want of knowing to do so aright. But God knows them all, and their workings in me, and how far I am led captive by them; and I assure you that I feel them so much that I am ashamed to lift up my guilty eyes to God. There is now in me no solemn drawing near to God; and though I attempt to confess my sins to him, and call upon him to turn me again, yet it seems as if I were left to him. No sweet deliverance is there now for me; and, what is

worse still, I fear to wander still further from Him in whom I would fain walk and move, and trust and rejoice.

All that appears to me to be left of God's work is, that when I think of my wretched state my soul heaves up sighs for deliverance, as a man almost dead gasps for breath. Yet I am favoured with light to see his kindness in many things. For instance, several pounds had been left by a certain gentleman to be expended in coals. Every house in the parish was to have some; but I, who stood in more need of them than many others, was to have none. And why? Because I was preserved from floating down the stream of a dead profession like the rest. Yes; and some of those who received the gift laughed me to scorn. For a few minutes I desired to share with them; but this thought soon occurred to my mind, "Poor things, their portion is in this life! Let them have it, and please themselves with it; it is only a few years for them, and, if an act of free, sovereign grace prevent it not, hell must finish their career. But I am favoured with a hope in God's great mercy through the bloodshedding of Jesus Christ, and at times I have felt a hope that maketh not ashamed, when the love of God is shed abroad in my heart." So I was reconciled to it; but the Lord thought upon me, and sent me more money than all that gift of theirs amounted to, which made me glad and doubly contented with my portion. O that I could praise him for his goodness, and for his wonderful works to the children of men!

I have been some time intending to write; but when I have felt an unction from the Holy One, want of paper and of opportunity have prevented me till it was too late. But I will just relate another instance of God's dealings with me, which to my mind appears very wonderful. I was very much afraid I should lose my wife in her confinement, as her mother had frequently told her it would kill her when it happened. When her time drew near and her pains were strong, I was greatly afraid, and cried inwardly to Him who is able to save from death. After a quarter of an hour's inward supplication, these words sprang up in my heart: "Shall I cause to bring forth and shut the womb? saith thy God." This greatly strengthened my hopes for a time; but then I bethought me that I must have read the words, and that my fears must have brought them to my recollection. So I desired of the Lord to give me words that were far from my thoughts, that I might know that he gave them to me; and, astonishing to tell, these words came: "At the appointed time I will come, and thy wife shall have a son," which was as far from my thoughts as the east is from the west. I lay wonderstruck for some time, for there was now no room for dispute; but at last, my wife having been long in labour, and those that attended her having given up hope, I was shaken to the centre, and verily thought that both mother and child would die, when these words came into my mind, "Behold, thy son liveth!" So I stood in the house, blessing and praising God for some minutes; and then I had news that the child was born. So I have named him Isaac, because of the promise.

Give my love to —, and all whose faces are heavenward. I hope you will bear with all that is amiss, and send when you are so disposed.—I remain, your soul's well-wisher, though in bonds,

January 30, 1843.

H. M.

**"WITH MY SOUL HAVE I DESIRED THEE IN
THE NIGHT."**

My dear Friend,—Having felt a great attachment to you for a long time, I hope for the truth's sake, I take the liberty of dropping a line or two to you, as perhaps I may never again see you, living at so great a distance, and fearing you are never again likely to visit us. I am the young man that you once blessed in the name of the Lord in the house of Mr. —, I suppose about six years since. I was at that time under exercise of mind about my state as a sinner, but I could not tell what was the matter with me. I was miserable because I knew and felt that I was a sinner. After you had spent a few minutes in prayer, I was coming away, when you rose up, and, putting your hand upon my head, you said, "The God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob bless thee." I shall never forget it; I felt as if my heart was broken; and I was obliged to get out as quickly as possible, for I could not speak. O, thought I, bless *me*! can He, will He, ever bless *me*? I wondered what could induce you thus to speak, and that it should have such an effect upon me; but I did not then feel so deeply what a sinner I was, but gradually, by little and little, I felt more and more the burden of it upon my conscience. For some time I got worse and worse, but I had no more idea than a beast that it was the Lord who was at work in me, until one day as I was walking, in a very low state of mind, in the garden which belonged to Mr. —, with whom I then was apprenticed, when these words were very powerfully brought to my mind: "One thing I know, that whereas I was blind, now I see." To tell how they were opened to my mind is impossible. I saw that I was a sinner and vile transgressor against a good God. I saw that I was condemned by his holy law, and my conscience said, "He will be just!" At this moment Christ was most gloriously set before my mind, but I never can describe the beauty, glory, and suitability that I saw in him. O with what longings, pantings, and groanings did my heart flow out to him to know if he was my Christ, and also to know if I was interested in his salvation, blood, and righteousness. Had it been in my power I felt as if I could have given ten thousand worlds to know that he was mine; but, alas! I was just given a glimpse of his beauty and loveliness, and then it was gone, and I have never yet been able to say, "My Lord and my God." The Lord still keeps me sighing after a satisfactory manifestation of himself to my soul. Sometimes all the exercises of my soul seem clean gone, and a deathly cold feeling rests upon me. Prayer is mere words; no drawing out of heart. I feel that I am neither fit for God nor yet for the world, and can only just cry out, "Lord, quicken thou me according to thy word!" for I do feel that none but God himself could again enable me to feel.

One morning, some little time since, while in this frame of soul, I fell upon my knees, but had not uttered many words before, I hope, a Spirit of grace and supplication was poured into my soul, and the desires of my heart were that God would cover my poor naked soul with the robe of Christ's righteousness, when it was to my soul's feelings as if the Holy Spirit had held out before the eye of my mind that glorious robe, and O the suitability thereof to my poor naked soul, and the desires of my heart after it, it is impossible to tell! And these words sounded with much blessedness to my heart: "Blessed are they that do hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled!" O with what sweet feelings was I enabled to tell the Lord, the Searcher of all hearts, that he knew that, viewing my own nakedness, it was the supreme wish of my soul to be clothed in that justifying robe; and that the Holy Spirit would imbue me with a hatred of all sin, and a loathing of myself on account of it daily and hourly, so that through the fear of God I might be preserved from bringing disgrace upon his cause and people, and be enabled to have a conscience void of offence towards God and man, and to live to him by a communication from Christ of life to the heart, through the Holy Spirit! And I was also enabled to tell him, with holy boldness, that he knew that these were the earnest cries of my soul; and I felt a hope, yea, almost a confidence, that in his own good time I should be filled. But O, this was but short; darkness has again covered the face of his throne, and I am often afraid all is but delusion. O that the Lord would make it plain to my soul that he is mine and I am his!

But I find that my paper is full, and I hope you will pardon me for thus troubling you, as I feel the affection of a son towards you, and should esteem a letter from you a great favour.—Believe me most affectionately yours,

L—, February 1st, 1843.

W. H.

BROOK'S LETTERS, No. IV.

My dear Sir,—I received a letter from you by Mr. B., which I have been long expecting. I know that when everything seems to go against us, and our springs are dried up, letter writing is an irksome task. To this, therefore, I imputed your silence; not without some suspicions that my freedom might have been offensive, through the manifold temptations and malicious designs of the father of lies.

Nevertheless, I feel more and more persuaded that God is working in you, to discover the fearful state you are in by nature, to bring you up to his holy mountain, and to make you joyful in his house of prayer. There is, in this work, a process going on to which we ourselves are strangers. Hence an interpreter is needed to unfold to us the mysterious designs and operations of God. Such an interpreter is the Holy Ghost, by the word; and if men are chosen to convey light to others, to afford help, and to give direction, still it is the Holy Ghost that is in them, who causes a word in season to be administered to them that are weary. The great thing is, to come to the light, comply with reproof, and take matters as they plainly are.

God, in his word, everywhere requires this. He does not insist upon any recommendations. His language to the fool is, "*Simple one*, and void of understanding, hear, receive instruction, give ear to my word." But, say you, I cannot. What, then, is to be done? God must lay upon us reproofs, rebukes, corrections, chastisements; these he applies home, by stroke upon stroke, to our hearts, that we may keenly feel the lashes he gives.

God is angry, and we must know it; we are froward, and therefore must be made sensible of it. We know that he is angry by these sensations in our souls: trouble, fear, distress, restlessness, trembling, and dreadful apprehensions of what is to come hereafter. Hence the psalmist says, "My flesh trembleth for fear of thee, and I am afraid of thy judgments;" and again, "My soul is full of trouble, and my life draweth nigh unto the grave; I am full of tossing, I am troubled, I am bowed down greatly, I go mourning all the day long." But why is all this? He tells us, "Thy arrows stick fast in me, thy hand presseth me sore, thy wrath lieth hard upon me, and thou hast afflicted me with all thy waves, because of thine indignation and wrath; for thou hast lifted me up, and cast me down." The further consequence of this is, a knowledge or feeling sense of our corruptions, which gain head, and become too strong for us. Hence you hear of complaints to this purpose: "I am bound;" "I am in misery;" "I cannot get out;" "Free among the dead;" "Like the slain in the grave;" "Mine iniquities are gone over my head, as a heavy burden, too heavy for me." These are the first lessons God teaches us. "He scourgeth every son;" his own son he "spared not." As soon as Christ took upon himself our guilt, so soon the very same things befel him, and in a ten thousand times sharper measure than ever they can fall upon us. Hence the complaints above mentioned are found in the Saviour's mouth. You know it is written, "We must be baptized in the likeness of his death," if we be "planted in the likeness of his resurrection." Christ's death was full of bitterness and gall; he died under the load of our guilt, and the wrath of an angry God. "He poured forth his soul unto death." "It pleased the Lord to bruise him, when he made his soul an offering for sin." Hence Paul declares that he partook of, and felt in a measure these sufferings. "I am crucified," saith he. Yet, what did the great "Captain of our salvation" learn? It is written, "In the days of his flesh, when he had offered up prayers and supplications, with strong crying and tears, to him that was able to save him from death, and was heard in that he feared, though he were a son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered." If, then, the elder was instructed, chastened, and visited, shall the younger escape? By no means; "If they be without chastisement, then are they bastards and not sons." And this escape from chastisement is the reason why so many of our brethren, both professing and profane, run into a work for which they were never fitted, nor sent by God. I do hope and trust the Most High is raising up, here and there, men zealous for his name, and valiant for the truth; and that he will never suffer you to go on with all the load of liturgy

ceremonies, human addresses, and even palpable errors in your conscience. I have tried these things, but when God begins a work, he goes on with it, and whatever we have heaped upon ourselves in our ignorance, he will tear it off, even if it be not false in itself.

If a man is sound in the letter, and holds the truth clearly in the head, as soon as God begins to handle him, he falls into all perplexity and darkness, and all the clearness he ever had tumbles into utter confusion. "Who is blind as my servant, or deaf as my messenger that I sent?"

That God may bless thee, is the fervent prayer of, yours to serve,
Brighton, July 12, 1809. W. J. BROOK.

AN ANSWER TO THE INQUIRY OF "A REJECTED ONE," ON NUM. XV. 30; DEUT. XVII. 12, 13; PSALM XIX. 13; 2 PETER II. 10.

(See *Standard for March*, 1843.)

I shall not attempt, in taking notice of these words, to occupy time in any doctrinal explanation of the word "presumptuously" in the scriptures quoted. I am fully persuaded that one hour's experience of the indwelling of the Holy Ghost in the soul is worth a hundred thousand volumes of doctrine in the head; therefore my intention, in taking notice of this inquiry, is, if possible, to inspire hope, and, if the Spirit of the Lord applies it, convey some comfort. With this view, therefore, I shall state nothing but what I have experienced.

In reading over the statement of the inquirer, who calls himself "A Rejected One," there seems a work of grace begun in his soul, but that work not sufficiently completed for him to form a judgment of his own state. Whether he feel "a rejected one" or not, I can tell him, I hope for his comfort, that while reprobates are fatally guilty of presumption, which is the great transgression, every one of God's children are also more or less guilty of presumption; and where the Holy Ghost is the teacher, conviction of presumption, among many other things, is brought home to the conscience. It is the power of God the Holy Ghost that brings upon the conscience this conviction of presumption. The Spirit of the Lord sheds light into the soul, and by that light the natural propensities are discovered, such as pride, lust, and other presumptuous sins too abominable and filthy to mention, but which every child of God feels guilty of when he is thus enlightened by the Spirit of God. A great many of the Lord's children are brought into this state, and they are left in this state for years, and this seems to be the bewildered state of the inquirer; and whilst in this state he may well make the inquiry whether he belongs to the Lord's family or not. But if the Spirit of the Lord has begun a work, that work will be completed in him in the Lord's own time. It is evident to me that if the work had been fully completed in the inquirer's soul, he would not have made the inquiry; he would have known it by a manifestation of the pardoning and redeeming love of the Lord Jesus Christ; he would have had a felt possession of the Holy Ghost in his soul, purging his

conscience from the guilt of presumptuous sins and of every other contamination, and the glory of the Lord would have filled his soul. He would have had an evidence, a felt evidence in his soul, that his sins were all forgiven; and the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus would have made him free from the law of sin and death. This is the fruit of deliverance, and every one of the Lord's family must be brought in some degree or other into this state; and by this the spiritually taught have divine eyesight given to them by the Holy Ghost to discern the living family of God from dead, empty professors. Now you would naturally suppose, being thus delivered, thus sanctified, thus justified, and thus glorified, that presumptuous sins and every sinful propensity were destroyed; but alas! it is very often the case that the conflict is more fierce than ever. The soul of man may be regenerated, but the flesh remains the same, with all its wicked propensities; there will be the same presumptuous sins and pride, and every other vile corruption to contend with; and in your Bible readings you will be troubled with the same lewd and presumptuous wanderings, as if all hell were let loose upon you. It is the devil that fills you with presumption and all kinds of abominations; or rather, those presumptuous sins and those abominations are already in you, and the devil brings them into action. Now this distresses the soul beyond measure; nevertheless, it is a part of the fire that we are to be tried with. Were I to tell my own experience, I have been in this fire hundreds of times, I might say thousands of times, during the last fifty-one years. The moment I have taken up the Bible, some vile thought has darted into my mind, and I have been obliged to lay it down again. I have then endeavoured to pray the Lord that he would subdue this devil within me, and taken up the Bible again; but I have not read more than half a dozen words before I was in precisely the same situation. I have been plagued in this manner for days and weeks together, and this is a part of the fire and a part of the cross, which every one of the Lord's family must endure at times, and very often too. I have been brought into so wretched a state, that I feared the devil had taken possession of me, both body and soul; and I have been brought to see myself in such a light, that I have conceived myself to be worse than the very devil, and if anybody ought to be damned I ought; and yet, after that the Lord has blessedly brought me to see myself as Paul describes: "The law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made me free from the law of sin and death," blessedly feeling that I was in Christ Jesus.

I will give you a specimen of my experience a few weeks ago. On the 18th of January, 1843, which was a blessed jubilee in my soul, I was in prayer to the Lord the greater part of the day, and towards the evening I was in a sweet frame of mind. I had been reading Huntington's "Kingdom of Heaven taken by Prayer," and this produced in my mind a sweet longing after the Lord, and a real desire for spiritual prayer. I felt that no prayer could be effectual but by the sweet overflowing of the Lord in the soul, lifting the soul up in spiritual prayer; and being blessed with this spiritual prayer, I

felt a union in my soul with the Lord. I then read that blessed book, the Life of Henry Tanner, with much sweetness, after which I laid it down, and whilst looking at the book the thought came over my mind, "What a glorious proof is that book of the spirituality of the religion of the Lord Jesus Christ in the soul!" The thought had scarcely gone over my mind when I felt the overpowering love of the Lord Jesus Christ flow into my soul, the Spirit of the Lord indeed bearing witness with my spirit that I was one of his spiritual family. O the joy and peace I then felt! I poured out the overflowing of my soul to the Lord in a flood of tears; yes, and I received fresh manifestations and more love, and my tears flowed afresh. I was overpowered with a sense of the presence of the Lord blessedly felt in my soul, and my tongue was loosed with such a flow of blessings and thanksgivings that I have scarcely ever experienced since the Lord first manifested his redeeming love in my heart. I am a poor fearful creature, but the Lord blessed me and comforted me with this sweet love visit; and this is another evidence that "the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made me free from the law of sin and death." Now after this you would naturally suppose that I should never be guilty of presumptuous sins any more; but two days had not passed over my head before I was convicted, in the court of conscience, of presumptuous sins which made me hold down my head in shame and confusion of face. Therefore, I should conclude that the ignorance, pride, and presumptuous sins that the inquirer feels in his soul are things the family of God are plagued with.

Handsworth, March 18, 1843.

G. D.

A FEW HINTS ON PSALM XXV.

No less than eight times the preposition "for" is introduced into the 25th Psalm; and so blessedly is it connected with doctrine, experience, and pleading, that it is worth considering briefly, leaving it for the more enlarged meditation of the reader. It is first introduced in the 5th verse, after a very earnest pleading with God for deliverance; and then our preposition winds up this portion of the plea, "*for thou art the God of my salvation.*" O what an appeal is here to past manifestations! How came he to know this? Because a covenant God had revealed it to him; because grace had touched his soul; because he had been led into God's ways; because he had been taught in God's truth. And then comes, "*for thou art the God of my salvation.*" Reader, are you led here? Are you hanging over this fountain? Are you getting health, cure, cleansing, peace, all in and out of Jesus as your salvation? Then you know something of the meaning of that "for." "Ah!" say you, "I have nowhere else to look, a poor mass of living corruption; at times both devil and beast, and worse than either." Then I am sure you need a God of salvation, who can and does (blessed be his name!) execute by omnipotent power all that his infinite wisdom designed; and therefore must "overturn, overturn, over-

turn" all other dependences in your soul, and so bring you to use David's preposition, "*for* thou art the God of my salvation." See, thou poor soul, the reason thy hopes from self are blasted, thy righteousness defiled, thy path crossed, thy wishes counteracted, thy iniquities turned up, thy evils exhibited! Why, all this, and a thousand times more, is just to keep thee in thy place, leaning upon this little preposition: "*for* thou art the God of my salvation." But,

2. We read another precious "*for*." "Remember, O Lord, thy tender mercies and thy loving kindness, *for* they have been ever of old." What a plea is here! "We are of yesterday," said Job. "We all do fade as a leaf," said Isaiah. "I am a worm," said the Psalmist. "Our days are as grass," said Moses; and again, "Our years are as a tale that is told." But here is the contrast between Jehovah and his creatures. His loving kindness is like himself, ever of old; his doing is like his being, therefore his work is from everlasting. "Our Redeemer, from everlasting is thy name; (Isa. lxi. 16;) therefore nothing in time can alter the current of his love, turn the tide of his affections, or cut off the streams of his mercy. Thus said Jehovah concerning his ancient Israel: "For I know their imaginations which they go about even *now*, before I brought them into the land." (Deut. xxxi. 21.) Did that make him forego his purpose? Did that make him change his decree? No; "*for* his mercy is ever of old." Therefore the church's mercy is to hear the voice of the Lord, saying, "Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love, therefore with loving kindness have I drawn thee." Did he ever speak thus to thy heart? Did he ever assure thee of his love? Then see the cause assigned in our little preposition, "*for* his loving kindness has been ever of old." This is the reason that, notwithstanding all thy vileness, the fiery unfoldings of an evil nature, and the treachery, idolatry, and adultery of thy black heart, that thy God still loves thee, pities thee, and "rebukes the devourer for thy sake;" yea, and has promised concerning thee that thy destroyers, and they that made thee waste, shall go forth of thee, "*for* his loving kindness is ever of old."

Bath.

"BEHIND A FROWNING PROVIDENCE, HE HIDES A SMILING FACE."

Dear Friend in the dear Lord of the house,—I drop you this line from a real feeling for you. I am really sorry, very sorry, that — has turned out as it has.

Well, my friend, this must be a trial for you, but I hope the dear Lord will support your mind, and grant you peace in him. Should it be a means of making you poor, remember the dear Lord was poor before you, and in the riches of his grace he has made you, in the best sense, rich through his poverty, and you will find in him One that will be a very present help in trouble. I know what poverty is, for I have been so poor as to feel grateful for twopence. I found the Lord a very present help then, but my friend — is not brought

there yet. I hope the dear Lord will lift up your mind into the sweet enjoyment of the Lord of life and glory. O, my dear friend, what a glorious treasure there is in Christ, what a fulness of all real good, and what a kind sympathizing friend the Lord Jesus Christ is! Here you may unbosom your whole heart, and make known your request, and you shall prove him to be a God near at hand—full of truth and grace. Bless his precious name, he delights in mercy, and takes pleasure in granting succour to those that really need it. Perhaps this trial may be one of the greatest blessings you ever had next to the salvation of your soul. I know my friend's flesh is like mine; it does not like hard treatment, but may the dear Lord enable you to read the eleventh chapter of the Hebrews and feel the power of the blessed Spirit therein; and as you read, may you, under the unction of God the Spirit, feelingly say, "These are my brethren, my best friends; with them I hope to spend an eternity in and with the Lord Jesus Christ, and each of us be glorious in his glory and blessed in in his blessedness." A few more storms and all will be over, and then, O the matchless grace of God, we shall be for ever free from all carking care, and be for ever with, and like the Lord. The Lord lead thee and thy spouse deeply into the deep things of God, and make your hearts warm and your faces shine with the unction of his love and grace, and then I am sure you will feelingly say, "All is well."—The Lord bless you indeed.

October 14, 1842.

W. G.

EDITORS' REVIEW.

Memoirs of the late William Nunn, nearly twenty-three years Minister of St. Clement's Church, Manchester. By Robert Pym, Rector of Elmley.—London: Hamilton, Adams, and Co. 1842.

We have read these Memoirs with more interest and pleasure than we had anticipated when we took up the volume. That they should be in a very experimental strain, and describe with much savour and power the work of God upon the soul, in its various branches, was not to be expected either from the character of the compiler, or of his deceased friend, whose life and ministry he has attempted to describe. This we did not anticipate, and are therefore not disappointed. But we have found in it more reality and originality, more simplicity and sincerity, more earnestness and feeling than we had looked for. We cannot, indeed, say that Mr. Nunn was a minister whom we should have chosen to sit under. Though possessed of great honesty and boldness in defence of doctrinal truth, and having much that was really admirable as a man and as a minister, yet he seems to us to have hovered too much over the surface of truth. That he was thoroughly in earnest, that he was singularly free from guile and hypocrisy, that he faithfully declared what he knew without the least compromise or evasion, that his eye was single to God's glory, and that his ministry was, to a certain extent, owned and blessed—all this

we willingly admit. But when we go a little deeper, and ask, Was his ministry discriminating, searching, and experimental? Was it suited to the tried and tempted of God's people? Did it embrace any wide range of Christian experience, either in height or depth? Did it adapt itself to the various classes and states of God's family? And, above all, was it clothed with that heavenly savour and power which breaks the hard, and binds up the broken heart? When we ask these questions, however unwilling we feel to breathe a disrespectful word against the dead, we must answer them in the negative. At any rate, the sermons that we have read of his, either published by him, or taken down from his lips, lead us to that conclusion.

And yet, in the absence of much that we would fain see, there was something real and original in the late Mr. Nunn which draws our heart towards him. He was no mimic nor ape; no pupil of a particular school, doling out in set phrases just so much as, and no more than, he had learnt under some leading minister, and imitating the very voice, manner, and gestures of his master. William Nunn's honesty would have scorned such little paltry ways of advancing himself. He neither angled for money nor popularity, but, fearless of consequences, declared what he knew of the truth, and sought and looked for the blessing of God upon it. How he continued in the wretched carnal system of which he was a minister is indeed a mystery; but as he was permitted to do so, we can only breathe a wish that in these days of Evangelicalism and Puseyism there were more William Nunn in the pulpit of the Establishment.

The chief defect, as it appears to us, in Mr. Nunn, viewed as a Christian, was his not having been led sufficiently deep into the experimental knowledge of himself. No man more firmly held the doctrine of man's utter ruin and complete depravity; and we doubt not that he knew enough of his own heart to make him loathe himself as vile before a holy God. But that deep and experimental knowledge of sinful self, that daily groaning under a body of sin and death, that almost unceasing conflict with temptation, that sinking down under felt helplessness, that brokenness and contrition of spirit which are given to and wrought in some servants of the Lord—of these internal teachings and leadings we discover few traces in the late minister of St. Clement's. The invariable accompaniment, therefore, of such teachings are necessarily absent; we mean that that vital and unctuous knowledge of the remedy, in all its branches, which is revealed in, and made suitable unto the felt malady, is also lacking. The hidden supports, sweet deliverances, and rich manifestations which those are favoured with who are much in the furnace, are not to be found in these memoirs. Mr. Nunn, if our view be correct, rather resembled the hospital surgeon than the hospital patient. None could better point out the remedies of the spiritual pharmacopœia; but, perhaps, had he lain more frequently in the wards, he might have had a deeper as well as a different sense and knowledge of the truths he preached.

Yet he was what he was by divine permission, and by divine operation. A deeper experience might have rendered him less useful in the post that he occupied. Standing upon the outskirts of the vineyard, he might have been made useful to the recently hired, whilst those who had borne the burden and heat of the day moved off to a ministry more suitable to their exercises. It is not probable that the Lord would place two ministers in the same town to do precisely the same work; and thus St. Clement's Church might sometimes have been a nursery for St. George's Road.

But it is time to enter more particularly on the Memoirs themselves.

Believing that *a good beginning* is of great value, we looked almost immediately to the beginning of Mr. Nunn's religion; and we must confess, a feeblér, more indistinct beginning, in a published experience, we scarcely know. We will make an extract from this part of the memoirs, premising that meeting with a book of travels through Derbyshire, he is stimulated by curiosity to take a journey on foot from Colchester, where he then lived with his widowed mother, to see the wonders of the Peak, and visit, on his way, Shrewsbury, where his elder brother was a clergyman professing godliness:

"After seeing the caverns, and travelling over the hills of the Peak of Derbyshire, I took the road for Shrewsbury, by way of Buxton, and reached Shrewsbury, after having walked about 300 miles in ten days; and now I come to a most important era of my life, inasmuch as the time was arrived at which it pleased the Lord to bring me to a saving knowledge of his grace. It should be observed, that at this time I was a moral young man, without any pretension to the character of a religious person.

"I had a sort of veneration for the preaching of the gospel, and estimated highly my brother's preaching, whom I had heard once or twice in our native town. I reached his lodgings on Saturday at noon, and accompanied him on the following day into the country, to the place where he preached. I thought there was something peculiar in his dwelling much in his sermon upon the blood and righteousness of Christ, and, as far as I can recollect, I could not understand what he meant. We returned to Shrewsbury. I said nothing to him about the sermon; but on the following day, Monday, Sept. 19th, after we had dined, I was led involuntarily to open my lips, and ask him some questions on religious subjects; and stated to him what I thought of myself. I certainly knew at this time that there were in the sight of God but two sorts of characters, the righteous and the unrighteous; and I believed that the former had a special knowledge of their state. I knew I had not that knowledge; the want of it, rather than any weight of conscious guilt, made me unhappy. I was led on to unfold to my brother what I thought of myself, and our conversation became more important as we proceeded. What he said to me was, I firmly believe, the appointed means eternally designed by the Lord for bringing me unto himself by the regenerating and enlightening operations of the Spirit upon my soul. I cannot remember any expressions which dropped from either of us, but I have a distinct recollection of the effect which his answers to my questions produced upon me. Tears dropped from my eyes, and I, naturally hard in mind, was brought down under the conviction then wrought in me of the unmerited grace of God, set forth in what my brother said to me. I believe, too, I was angry with myself, in that I wept, accounting it a weakness which the pride of my heart would have suppressed. Our conversation lasted about an hour. From that hour I became a new creature. Happy period! Why ever blessed with the mercy then manifested? All, all may be traced to the everlasting union of my soul to Him in whom I was chosen before the foundation of the world, to the possession

all spiritual blessings. "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ; according as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy, and without blame before him in love. Having predestinated us into the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will; to the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved." (Eph. i. 3—6.) Thus terminated a most singular occurrence; yea, the most singular that ever occurred in the dispensations of Providence towards me; the reading a book of travels causing me to undertake a long and tedious journey on foot, occupying nearly five weeks, in which I had walked, upon an average, nearly thirty miles a day, and all secretly ordained of God to bring me to a knowledge of myself, and of the fulness of redeeming love."

This is the account from Mr. Nunn's own pen, in a memoir written by himself in 1830, nearly twenty-two years after the event took place, and about twelve years after his being settled at Manchester, and, therefore, when his views were fully matured. Now, surely this is but a feeble, indistinct beginning, and he himself seems to have thought so, for he says a little lower down :

"From my brother's remark, and my reply, I gather that my mind, so recently impressed, was not labouring under deep convictions of guilt, or much engaged in reflecting upon the grace of God; and it does seem singular that the above important and interesting conversation I had had with my brother was not resumed during the time I remained with him at Shrewsbury."

We should expect from this indistinct beginning to find increasing convictions of sin as we proceed, to make up, so to speak, for the feebleness of the outset, and thus prove its genuineness and reality. But whatever he felt, and he might have felt much that is not here recorded, we certainly cannot find very decisive indications of this part of the Spirit's work in these Memoirs. Almost the only account he gives of his convictions is in the following extract :

"Mrs. F., (Fletcher of Madeley's widow,) in her prayer which followed my brother's, prayed for me. What she said impressed me very much; I could have sunk, as I thought, out of sight. I doubt not but the Lord then granted me a deep sense of my own vileness and unworthiness as a transgressor before him."

It appears, however, that this lady, under whose prayer he was so affected, was a thorough Arminian, for in the previous conversation she had said, "Aye, there is a trap-door in our heart which we may let down to earth, or lift up to heaven." What spiritual prayer could come out of the trap-door of her heart is to us, indeed, a mystery. He that has the key of David (Rev. iii. 7) could not have been much groaned after.

On his return home he passes through the forest of Dean. Here we meet with the next mark of a change :

"Sheltering in a cottage on the forest during the rain, I took from my pocket a little book which my brother had given me, (Mason's Believer's Pocket Companion,) and, for the first time in my life, read a religious book with any degree of interest or pleasure. I believe my heart was much refreshed with what I read."

Now, it surely cannot be said that this is a strong, marked, decided beginning; and yet if this were not the beginning of a work of grace on Mr. Nunn's soul, there is no other recorded. He

himself believed it to be such, and gave it the seal of his own authority in the Memoir by himself, which Mr. Pym has made use of.

But we find that our space does not permit us further to enlarge, and we hope, therefore, to resume the subject in our next number.

POETRY.

"THE FLESH LUSTETH AGAINST THE SPIRIT, AND THE SPIRIT AGAINST THE FLESH."

Obedient to you, these lines I rehearse,
On the fifth of Galatians, and seventeenth verse;
Perhaps you will wonder I wrote it so soon,
And think it was done by the light of the moon.

The cause of my writing I cannot conceive,
Except my encumbered mind to relieve;
For so soon as I read your letter to me,
This burden fell on me, from which I'm now free.

The flesh and the Spirit can never agree;
The flesh bringeth bondage, the Spirit sets free;
The flesh is corruption, the Spirit is pure;
The flesh is my plague, but the Spirit my cure.
The Spirit works faith God's truth to believe;
The flesh teacheth lies, my soul to deceive;
The light of the Spirit exposes my sin;
The flesh covets darkness, because it's unclean.

The Spirit will make my sins be confess,
For it shows the pollutions there are in my breast;
The flesh cannot bear to be brought to the light,
Makes many excuses, and skulks out of sight.

But I, through the Spirit, am willing to know
This hater of God and cause of my woe:
I pray Him to search me and bring him to view,
That I may both hate him and conquer him too.

But O what deception the villain puts on!
Old ways are left off, new garments are worn;
And so fearful is he of losing his fame,
Like Satan, he changes his shape and his name.

Until the good Spirit discloseth the cheat,
We trust to a varnish of hellish deceit;
Wrapt up in delusion, conclude we are clean,
Yet never were washed from the filth of our sin.

But, glory to him! by his unction divine
He takes off this varnish so charmingly fine;
The blackest transgressions appear to our eyes,
And mountains of sin which reach up to the skies.

Now doth this old devil renew his attack;
Tells us there's no pardon, our sins are so black,
And (lest we should overcome heaven by prayer)
Endeavours to sink us to hopeless despair.

But the Spirit of prayer, the Spirit of grace,
Shows the Rock of salvation, the Fountain of peace;
Gives hope to the soul of succeeding at last,
And curbs this tormentor when talking so fast.

Quite bent on destruction, this cursed old man
Tries every manœuvre the devil can plan,
To hinder the seeker from coming to God
By hope in his mercy, through faith in his blood.

As the son, whom his father brought near to the Lord,
That of his disaster the boy might be cured,
Was torn by the devil within him afresh,
Just so is the seeker dealt with by his flesh.

Some former temptation the devil renews,
And his helper within the same object pursues ;
Thus Satan without, and his darling within,
Contrive to entangle believers in sin.

So soon as the cords have taken fast hold,
And he is persuaded with sin to be bold,
A terrible rending is sure to begin ;
For Satan declares 'tis th' unpardonable sin.

Now (says the old man) you will surely be damned,
Your sin is far worse than has ever been named.
To hope now for mercy is madness extreme ;
The devil as soon may hope mercy from Him !

But (saith the good Spirit) pray, how do you know
That the Lord won't have mercy, except that you go ?
Return to the Lord ; your transgressions confess,
And he will forgive, for his own righteousness.

Thus by grace led along we to Jesus repair,
And he is most gracious to answer our prayer ;
With joy we experience salvation by grace,
And wonder the Lord should so smile in our face.

But soon the old monster bestirs him again,
And seeks to do hurt by a different plan ;
Takes measures to make us secure in the flesh,
Till troubles arise to alarm us afresh.

The doctrines of grace, and our title to heaven,
And covenant mercies most faithfully given,
Now he will discourse on ; and cleverly too,
Like a friend who rejoices some good to bestow.

We listen and listen until we are done,
Till light is departed and darkness comes on ;
Conclude we are right, for the truth we believe ;
Salvation is certain, for God won't deceive.

By little and little from worship we cease ;
In ev'ry devotion are rather remiss ;
Our conscience is hardened ; we stumble and fall ;
Then think our religion is nothing at all.

Continuance in sin our God won't permit ;
His Spirit now brings us to fall at his feet,
Again to confess what vile rebels we are,
And again to obtain his great mercy by prayer.

But O, when revealed, what wonders appear
In the grace of salvation to such as we are !
Our sins are forgiven, our miseries gone,
And all through the blood of his crucified Son.

The good Spirit's teaching will prove it is true,
(Though we are not saved for what we shall do ;)
Yet 'tis in obedience through Christ we enjoy
The smiles of the Father, which none can destroy.

But time would now fail me, to tell all I know
Of the grace of my friend, and the spite of my foe.
Accept what is written ; a very small part,
But know, it is written in the love of my heart.

THE GOSPEL STANDARD,

OR,

FEEBLE CHRISTIAN'S SUPPORT.

"Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness; for they shall be filled."—Matt. v. 6.

"Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began."—2 Tim. i. 9.

"The election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded."—Rom. xi. 7.

"If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest.—And they went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch; and he baptized him.—In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost."—Acts viii. 37, 38; Matt. xxviii. 19.

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TRUTH IN AMERICA.

We inserted, under this head, in a late number, a sermon by a Dr. Froeligh; and we now have the pleasure of introducing into our pages a copy of a letter written by a Mr. Osbourn, a minister, we believe, in New York, to a great professor of religion; which has been sent us by a friend, and which we think our readers will, with ourselves, consider faithful, discriminating, and experimental. We hope shortly to insert another piece by the same writer.

THE EDITORS.

COPY OF MR. OSBOURN'S ANSWER TO A LETTER ADDRESSED TO HIM BY A GENTLEMAN OF HIGH REPUTE IN RELIGION AT NEW YORK, AMERICA.

Dear Sir,—As you in your letter manifest a great deal of candour and openness of mind, I, in making a reply, will use great plainness of speech, and will, at the same time, hope that the Lord may seal instruction on your heart. It may be you are all that you say you are, and a great deal more. You may also perform all that you say you do, and yet fall vastly short of being a Christian in heart. You may, as it seems you are, be a member of a church; be in high esteem among professors of religion, concerning which you speak with emphasis; be thought well of by your minister, which you appear to glory in; be much applauded for your zeal and diligence, which seems a sweet morsel to you; possess a good talent for exhortation, respecting which you throw out some broad hints; but, alas! know you not, my good sir, that all

the above things may be true, and yet you remain a total stranger to the power of God and to a radical change of heart. Believe me when I say that you may attend public service constantly, pray frequently, and read continually, and yet, as to spiritual things, be as blind as a bat and as dead as a stone. Real religion, sir, and vital godliness, are something more than all this; and I am sorry to find your letter savour so much of the former and nothing of the latter. You seem to make a great bustle and noise, but what does it all amount to, when properly dissected and squared by the word of God? Why, to me it appears like a puff of empty air. I do not write thus, sir, to discourage you, but to correct you wherein I conceive you miss the mark in matters of the highest importance. I hope I shall not be thought to transgress when I say, if you have not had the fountain of sin in your own heart broken up; if you have not discovered and felt the wrath of God in his holy law going out against you as a sinner; if you have not found yourself under the arrests of divine justice, and thereby exposed to eternal ruin; if you have not had that sound sense of your lost condition which has made you flee from the wrath to come; if you have not had the knowledge of salvation, by the forgiveness of your sins, communicated by the Holy Spirit; if Christ has not been formed in your heart the hope of glory; if you have not laid hold on eternal life; if you have not hungered and thirsted after divine instruction, under a feeling sense of gross darkness upon you, and been desirous of knowing more of Christ Jesus by the Spirit's testimony of him, whom to know is eternal life; if you have not been made, in some good degree, sick of sin, sick of self, sick of this world, and willing to part with and leave all for Christ; if these things, I say, have not in some measure taken place and been experimentally known by you, your hope is fallacious, your peace is a false peace, your faith is fantastical, your joy is delusive, your knowledge is speculative, your love of God is feigned, your fear is servile, your change of heart is mere notion, your religion is vain, and you are yet in your sins, notwithstanding all the great outcry you are now making about religion and your wonderful change of mind.

True religion and real Christianity, sir, consist in something more than mere notion or whim. It is not what a man may think he is, but what God has actually made him to be, by an act of mere mercy and grace, that constitute him a true disciple of Christ.

Not a few in this our day are, it is to be feared, setting themselves down satisfied, as I fear you are, under an impression that all is right between God and their souls, merely because they are well enough thought of to be taken into church fellowship, and some other outside things, such, I mean, as you lay so much stress upon in your letter. O sad mistake! A most awful delusion is this, which a day that is quickly coming will disclose and make known, and then how grievously will they be surprised and astonished who have made lies their refuge, falsehood their covering, and an arm of flesh their support. I wish that you, dear sir, may

not prove to be one of this sort. I shall, however, have just cause to fear it until you can give a better account of yourself than you have hitherto done. I find you are not at a loss for words to express your ideas. Indeed, your letter bespeaks the scholar, and such I know you are, but I do not know that you are a Christian, nor can it be known from what you have communicated to me.

Your state, sir, in the sight of God, is not bettered by your joining a church, though you fondly imagine it is. Permit me to say, that if your heart is not right in the sight of God, which it cannot be unless God himself sets it right, it matters not what outward show you may make, or what people may think or say of you; it is Christ in the heart "the hope of glory" that constitutes a real Christian; whereas, the name of Christ in a mere notion of him will avail nothing at all in the day of trial or on a death bed. Many have known enough of Christ, of themselves, of the law of God and the gospel of his Son, of the plan of salvation, and of the stability of the covenant of grace, in the theory, to get themselves a great name among men, and a high station in a church for many years together, and perhaps all their lifetime; and yet, when they have been summoned to appear in another world, have found themselves totally destitute of that which alone can make a dying bed easy. There was but one leper out of ten that returned to give glory to God, and he was a stranger, a poor Samaritan. (Luke xix. 15.) And so it often happens among the great crowd who make a profession of religion and become members of churches; it is only now and then a poor stranger that comes in for the blessings of the gospel, and he is generally looked upon by graceless professors as a Samaritan, and as one in nowise friendly to them. When the Lord singles out one for himself from the company of graceless professors, and opens his ears to discipline, opens his heart to receive the truth, opens his eyes to see wondrous things out of his law, and opens his mouth to show forth his praise, such a one will speak of what he has known, felt, handled, and tasted of the word of life; and as he can very generally tell a hypocrite from a real saint, he will take the liberty of pointing him out, and will state some of his hypocritical windings and turnings; and as he also knows truth from error, he will receive the former and reject the latter, though the latter proceed from a clergyman. But as such proceedings will be sure to prove very offensive to those who have only a name to live, his name will soon be cast out as evil, and he will be viewed as a pestilent fellow, and as one who is trying to turn their churches upside down, whereas he is only endeavouring to undeceive those who are deceiving themselves and others. I do not write thus, sir, with a view of discouraging you from attending to that which is good, but to caution you against wolves in sheep's clothing, and against trusting in a name to live, while, it may be, you are dead. Man is naturally prone to fly to a false refuge, and to content himself with a false peace; this is like Zoar, "near to flee to;" and it is one of the hardest things in the world to persuade a man that his hope is delusive. And yet I am

convinced if God should stir up his wrath against a man who is in a delusion, however confident he may be of the safety of his state, it would cause his beauty to fade like a leaf. And if this, sir, should take place in your experience, it is more than twenty to one with me that you would cut a very different figure from what you now expect. O sir, try to think how astonished you would stand in case your present certainty of salvation were overturned and brought to nought, and your confidence rejected! It is surprising to think, and impossible to tell, how the burning wrath of God revealed in a broken law, and sent home with full force to the conscience, does scorch, wither, consume, and burn up a man's false faith, false hope, false joy, and false peace. It is evident from the oracles of God that none will be able to stand with peace and composure in the day of the Lord's wrath, but those who have their anchorage in Christ Jesus, having fled for refuge to lay hold of that blessed hope set before us in the gospel. All false props, sir, will, in that day totter, sink, and fall under the man who leans upon them, and the guilty soul thus left will be exposed to all the curses contained in the book of the law. A mere form of religion, an outward show in the flesh, will then put off its flattering charms, and appear in its true garb. O if men were duly sensible of this, they would not dream of taking rest in such outside things as they now do. Believe me, dear sir, it is not an outward profession of religion, but an inward possession of the grace of God, that constitutes a Christian; not knowledge in the head, but the root of the matter in the soul, that ensures eternal life to us; not what a man says, but what he feels, that proves that he has got divine life in his inward part; not what he does for God, but what God has done for him, that makes him meet for the kingdom of heaven. It is not fancy, but faith, which purifies the heart; not a vain confidence, but a good hope through grace, which keeps and bears up the soul in the day of evil; not the esteem of men, but the approbation of God, which brings peace to the troubled conscience; not being united to a church here below, but being one with Jesus, the true and living Vine, that makes our standing eternally secure; not the natural passions stirred up, but the oil of joy poured into the soul, that makes a man forget his poverty, and remember his misery no more; not partaking of bread and wine at the Lord's table, but feeding on Christ by faith, that makes him flourish, thrive, and grow. It is not a name to live among men, but having his name written in the book of life, which proves a man to be a vessel of mercy. It is not a blind zeal, but a zeal according to knowledge derived from the Spirit's teaching and testimony of Christ in a man's understanding and conscience, that will make him approved of God. It is not what we may be thought of by those around us, but what God's thoughts towards us are, that will be the turning point, and decide our case when death comes. These things, it may be, will greatly astonish you, but as sure as there is a God, they are the turning points in religion, and on them our eternal salvation hangs. Look to it, therefore, and do not trifle with, or think lightly of,

things of such vast moment; for if you do, it may prove to your cost in a day yet to come. If our names are not found written among the living in the spiritual Jerusalem, we shall be cast out as withered branches, let us attain to what place of honour and greatness we may in the church below. As to your being in good standing among professors, this is but a small matter when compared with some other things; and how a man of your sense and reading can be so exalted and enthusiastically carried away with such little things, I cannot account for in any other way than by St. Paul's rule: "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. Should God be pleased, in the multitude of his tender mercies, to open your eyes and bring you to see things as they really are, you will look back on your present state with amazement and horror, seeing it to be as perilous as I now conceive it to be.

Dear sir, do turn these things over in your mind, and search closely into your standing before the Lord, and be not deceived, for God is not mocked. I would advise you to read the Bible very attentively, and earnestly to beg of God to set you right if you are wrong, as it is greatly to be feared you are. Pay less regard to the good opinion that men may have of you, as they will not be your judges in the great day of account. Remember, God will be the righteous Judge at that day, and that by his decision you will stand or fall. Consider also how many have been deceived in the end about the business of salvation and the goodness of their state, though they seemed before to possess an unshaken confidence of their being right. Examine well the ground of your present hope, the foundation of your faith, and what authority you have to draw a determined conclusion that your heart is right in the sight of God. Bear with me while I once more say that I stand in doubt of you, and that I can see no just reason on the face of your letter for you to conclude, as you now do, that your condition in the sight of God is good. This, however, I know, God is able to do great things for you, and I know not but he will, and perhaps he is at work with you now. If this should be the case, the work will go on and be brought to perfection, and you will have cause to admire his grace, and to be thankful for his unspeakable mercy. Seek for these things, my dear sir, with all diligence, and God grant you a successful issue. With regard to myself, I must needs say, that the esteem and good will of men, even of spiritual men, have but little weight with me; yea, no weight at all in reference to my standing before God. I am constrained to look to a much higher source for a foundation on which to venture my immortal part. Nothing short of a believing view of Christ as crucified for me, and the witness of the Holy Ghost with my spirit that I am a child of God, will carry me ascendant over fears and doubts whether all is right or not. And inasmuch as nothing short of these things will satisfy my own soul, I must still doubt the safety of those who are contenting themselves with

things of so trifling a nature as you appear to do. It may be that my great plainness with you will give offence, but I must risk that. In matters of religion we ought, like Paul, to use great plainness of speech, and not as Moses, who put a vail over his face, that the children of Israel might not look to the end of that which was to be abolished.

Write again, sir, whenever you think proper. Say what you please, only do not be angry; and if you do, I won't.

I am in good bodily health, and I hope this is the case with you. You know where to write to me. * Adieu.

J. OSBOURN.

MR. HUNTINGTON'S EXPLANATION OF HEBREWS VI. 4—8.

Our correspondent having redeemed his pledge to send us Mr. Huntington's explanation of Heb. vi. 4—8, we have the pleasure of now inserting it. We believe it is one of "The Epistles of Faith." And we must say that we never read any explanation of the passage so convincing and so satisfactory. The Doctor has handled the subject like a master in Israel, and, in his usual felicitous way, has combined brevity with fulness, strength with clearness, scripture with experience, and faithfulness with tenderness.

THE EDITORS.

Sir,—I received yours, and, in compliance with your request, I send you my thoughts upon the subject; but at the same time I must inform you, that none but God can give you an answer of peace. The priest's lips are to keep knowledge, and we are to require the law at his mouth; for he is the messenger of the Lord of Hosts. (Mal. ii. 7.) This great High Priest, Prophet, and Apostle of our profession is the Lord Jesus Christ, to whom we are to go, and of whom we are to seek wisdom. He giveth liberally, and upbraideth not; and there is none that teacheth like him. But now for the words: "For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened." A man may be enlightened, as Balaam was, who saw the vision of the Almighty, whilst in a trance, having his eyes open. The Lord came to him first at Pethor; and he afterwards saw the angel of the Lord standing in the way with his drawn sword in his hand. He saw likewise the safety of Israel under the blessing of God and his counsel, and that God was not a changeable Being. He saw that Israel should never be reckoned among the nations, but remain a distinct people, even when dispersed throughout the world. He saw the destruction of Amalek, &c., and the blessed death of the righteous, and wished that his last end might be like theirs. The eye of a man's understanding is one thing, and the eye of faith is another. By the former, the rich man in hell saw Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom; by the latter, the patriarchs saw the promises afar off, and embraced them. By the former, a man sees the blessed state of others; by the latter, he sees his own state. Balaam saw

God for others, but not for himself. Job says, "I shall see him for myself, and not for another." Balaam never saw the desperate evil that there is in sin, nor the spirituality of the law, nor the Lord as a Saviour, but as an angry Judge with a drawn sword, in which character every eye shall see him in the great day. The Lord shone into Balaam's head; he shone into Paul's heart. He opened the eyes of Balaam, but he opened the heart of Lydia. Balaam saw a sword; Paul saw an atonement. Balaam saw a Judge; Paul saw a Saviour. Balaam and the Egyptians saw God for Israel; Job saw God for himself.

If thou art enlightened, thou hast seen sin; but hast thou ever seen and felt the killing evil of sin? Thou hast been enlightened to see the word, which is a light shining in a dark place; but has the day dawn and day star arisen in thy heart? If enlightened, thou hast seen the spirituality of the law; but hast thou seen and felt the dreadful havock it makes by working wrath in the conscience? and have the sight and sense of this made thee flee to Christ for refuge, in whose face we see the light of the knowledge of the glory of God? If the light of faith shines into a man's heart, whatever that man sees, he applies sooner or later. By faith he sees the promises, and by faith he applies them. By faith he comes to Christ, and by faith he receives him. He views the atonement, and pardon is the effect of the vision. Imputed righteousness is revealed, and peace is the fruit of it as soon as applied. Eternal life is the gift of God, and by the gospel it is brought to light. "God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself;" faith applies the word of reconciliation, while friendship and fellowship are felt and enjoyed.

"And have tasted the heavenly gift." By this is meant, not Christ, nor eternal life, nor the gift of faith, nor repentance, for the gifts and calls of God are without repentance, but I think a spiritual gift such as the Corinthians were zealous of (1 Cor. xiv. 12) is chiefly intended, a gift of prophecy, or a ministerial gift to preach, attended with a reformation, zeal, and a gift of utterance, which things have a relish in them for a carnal heart; yea, the possessor of this gift tastes a sweetness in it because it procures much applause from men, which is the sweetest morsel that can be given to an un-renewed, unhumiliated man. He delights in his gift because it procures him the praise of men; he tastes the former, and fills his belly with the latter, for he loves the praise of men more than the praise of God. But this tasting differs widely from what is called eating the flesh and drinking the blood of Christ, which is peculiar to believers, and it is by this they live for ever.

"And were made partakers of the Holy Ghost." Not that the Holy Ghost ever took possession of their hearts, so as to become a spring of living water there; for the above-mentioned persons were not partakers of eternal life; nor had they received the first fruits of the Spirit; neither had the testimony of the Spirit been applied to their conscience, nor his grace to their hearts; nor had they received the impression of his ratifying, confirming, sealing power, by which the saints are assured of their interest in Christ. These things ac-

company salvation, and are the first fruits, pledges, and earnest of future glory. The characters here named are made partakers of the Holy Ghost in no other sense than was Balaam or Saul; the Spirit of God came upon them both, and they both prophesied. This is a spiritual gift; and there are divers "spiritual gifts, but all of the Holy Spirit. It is he that divides them to every man severally as he will. He gave utterance both to Saul and Balaam, and it was by him they spoke and prophesied. (1 Cor. xii.)

"And have tasted the good word of God." As Herod, who heard John gladly; and the Jews, who rejoiced in his light for a season; and the wayside hearers, who heard the word, and anon with joy received it. They were pleased with the sound, amazed at the light and understanding of the preacher, admired the fluency of his speech, and were charmed with the heavenly tidings brought forth; and all this time they found no opposition, either from the law, conscience, Satan, or the carnal enmity of their own hearts, to these things; therefore, they received the word with joy, and sprang up into a warm, zealous, joyful profession. But when temptations and persecutions came because of the word, they withered away as fast as the sprang up, which fulfils the saying of the wise man: "An inheritance may be gotten hastily at the beginning, but the end thereof shall not be blessed." It is not enough to *taste* the good word of God. Ezekiel *ate* the roll; John *ate* the little book; Jeremiah *sounded* the word and *ate* it, and it was to him the rejoicing of his heart. "My word," says Christ, "is spirit, and my word is life." But he says to the Jews, "I know you that my word hath no place in you;" it is not in your heart, affections, and conscience. They did not receive the truth in the love of it, nor the love of the truth, and therefore it is no wonder if strong delusions are sent, and they are given up to believe a lie. In short, these persons could have no more than a natural faith, and as to their joy, it sprang from natural affections; for the love of God, the root of the matter, they had not; it was for want of this root that they withered away.

"And the powers of the world to come." By this I understand the power of working miracles. There were in those days numbers of persons who had spiritual gifts of healing, working miracles, speaking with tongues, &c.; and the Saviour tells us that many will say unto him in that day, "We have prophesied in thy name, and in thy name cast out devils, and done many wonderful works," but these he will never own as his people. It is not what man does for God that saves him, but what God does for man; not man's wonderful works, but God's free grace. This power of working miracles may be called "the powers of the world to come," because it is a divine power, sent from heaven and from God himself, who displays his power and glory there; and by these wonderful works he displays his power on earth. These miracles produce amazement, astonishment, and wonder in those who see them performed, on which account they may be called "the powers of the world to come;" for in that world everything will appear miraculous, wonderful, and astonishing beyond all conception. Moreover, it was common among

the Jews in days of old to call the days of the Messiah "the world to come;" and Isaiah foretold many wonderful things of a miraculous nature that were to be performed by the Messiah, such as making the lame to leap like a hart, and the tongue of the dumb to sing. These miraculous operations were by the Jews called the powers of the world to come; and these miracles were wrought by many who will not be saved, as I have before shown. True joy springs from the manifestation of Christ in the heart: "I will see you again, and your heart shall rejoice, and your joy no man taketh from you." This manifestation produces pardon and peace, the experience of which worketh hope, and the soul rejoices in hope of the glory of God; and hope maketh not ashamed, because the love of God is shed abroad in the heart, which is the root of all real joy.

My dear sir, did you ever know what it was to abhor yourself in dust and ashes? Did you ever mourn in private under a sense of your lost estate, and the wrath to which sin hath exposed you? Were you ever bowed down under the intolerable burden of guilt, and the fear of death? If this ever was your case, to whom did you apply? How did you get rid of your troubles, or where did you leave your burden? Christ says, "I will give them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, and the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness." If this is your experience, your joy is the joy of the Lord. The faith of those who for a while believed, sprang from a conviction in the mind of the supernatural power of Christ, as displayed in his miracles. "When they saw the miracles that he did, many believed in him;" but when those performances were over, their natural convictions sank, and as persecution attended their profession, their natural conscience failed, and they fell away. The faith of God's elect purifies the heart, by bringing the atonement home; it lays hold of the righteousness of Christ, and puts it on; it leads the soul to Jesus, and works by love to him; it attends prayer, and brings answers from God; it is very busy under a sermon; it mixes faith with the word, and applies the promises; while God fills the soul with joy and peace in believing. In short, if thou art a real believer, thou hast had a share of persecution and temptation, to try thy faith, as well as they; and, if these have not withered thy profession, it is a plain proof that thy faith is not natural. Farewell.

I remain, thy willing servant,

W. H.

"WHO COMFORTETH US IN ALL OUR TRIBULATION."

The Lord was pleased to lay his fatherly rod on me on Lord's Day morning, January the 14th, 1843. The same morning, the blessed Spirit sweetly led me twice to a throne of grace, with so much freedom, nearness, and access, and gave me such sweet humility, self-abasement, and soul-contrition, that I found it good to be there, and even a Bethel to my soul. I found "Him of whom Moses in the law and the prophets did write, Jesus of Nazareth," the friend of

poor sinners, and a precious friend to me. He blessed me with this precious promise: "When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee." I was sensible that I was in deep waters; and the dear Lord was pleased, for his great name's sake, to fulfil his promise. He was pleased, by the Holy Ghost, to lead me to that suffering scene where he bore all the huge load of my immense sins and iniquities, and endured the punishment which was due to me from a holy God. I was led to Gethsemane's garden; and there I saw the Lord Jesus in all his agonies and sufferings; and, close to that sacred spot, I saw that foul brook, Kedron. I was led feelingly into all the sufferings that the blessed Jesus bore, the wrath of God that he endured, the torture of his holy soul with the weight of the sins of all his dear children, and the thirst under which he cried out. It was such a sight that my soul seemed to have left my body, and gone to commiserate with the Lord of life and glory. O wonder of wonders! O amazing love! O the riches of free grace! O the condescension of a covenant God to me, even me, poor worthless me, hell-deserving me; monster that I am, base wretch that I am in myself, but precious in his sight.

My pain of body, at this time, was very great; but, being led so sweetly into the sufferings of Jesus, it being so sweetly overruled by his sovereign arm being underneath, (for I had a manifested proof that underneath were laid the everlasting arms,) that my sufferings seemed nothing; so that I often cried out, "It is nothing; it is nothing;" and the dear Spirit was pleased to lead me into his holy word, where he says that he will take away all their dross and all their tin. I tried, when I saw his lovely, bleeding heart, to muster and gather together some of my base sins and iniquities, to lay before him; but I could not find one; no, ever-adored be his precious name, he had put them all away by the sacrifice of himself. As I was led so sweetly into his sufferings, he was pleased to give me another promise, that they that suffer with him should also reign with him; and this was a sure pledge, to my soul, of eternal glory. Whether I lived or died, I was happy in his hands; I was resigned to his sovereign will. Blessed be his holy name for such precious grace bestowed upon such a worthless worm as I am. O how my soul did bless and praise him! I wanted all in heaven and in earth to praise him for me; for I could not praise him enough. All language failed. "Wonder, O heavens! and be astonished, O earth! for the Lord hath done it." I continued blessing and praising him. "O," said I, "there is none so blessed as I in the town." Then my eye was cast on all professors, then on all the learned, then on all the rich in the place. The professor did not know the secret, the learned was ignorant, and the rich was poor; but, as for my soul, it was in possession of the true riches. Heaven was mine, and all its glory. Never, till this time, had I the full assurance of faith; but now I could feelingly say, "My Lord and my God."

Surely such a worthless wretch as I am, after receiving such wonderful grace, love, and favour, had a right to sing. O how I did want to sing. I could have sung from morning till night sometimes.

I did sing, and my soul did rejoice. But though I was too weak to sing much, my soul did rejoice with joy unspeakable, and was full of glory. O memorable blessings! Surely eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man, to conceive that eternal weight of glory which is provided for his dear blood-bought children, and which did so sweetly fill my soul with joy. For this, and many more unspeakable blessings, honours crown his brow; for I have not felt one murmuring thought against him, although numerous things naturally appeared like mountains; and, I having a large family, many would think that it would make them still greater; but the dear Lord was pleased to overrule all, and give me a sweet feeling that he would be with me, and bless me; so that there was nothing that troubled me; for the dear Lord took all my trouble away. In my own feelings, I had no symptoms of death; but many thought that I was very near it; and we had a letter from my wife's friends, which expressed much natural feeling towards my wife, as being left with a large family to the mercy of the world. When I heard it read, it seemed to me like rebellion; but the blessed Spirit breaking in upon my mind, I was so overcome with the goodness, love, mercy, grace, and favour of my covenant God, (though my poor tabernacle was little else than skin and bone,) and I was so overpowered with it, that if ever I was near death, it was then. The glory of the Lord filled his house, as we are blessedly taught that our bodies are the temples of the Holy Ghost; and the dear Lord having come into his temple, there was no room for anything else. O the overpowering sight of the love of my covenant Father, flowing through Christ my covenant Head, and powerfully brought home and sealed with divine unction, dew, savour, and power, by the Holy Ghost, to my soul, which is so very unworthy of the least of all his favours.

Before this affliction, I was the subject of many trials, of which the greatest was from the devil and my own evil heart. I was so troubled with evil thoughts, that I often cried out like a bear bereaved of her whelps. I had no one at work with me except my two little boys, who, looking up with earnestness, wanted to know what was the matter; but I could not tell them. Though this was the case, the dear Lord was often pleased to release me from my captivity, and bless me with a broken heart, a tender conscience, liberty of soul, and much sweet access to a throne of grace. While my body and soul were so sweetly exercised, I had no doubt of my interest in my dying Lord Jesus; but, as soon as I had done imploring his blessed Majesty, I could no more say, "My Lord and my God," than I could make a world, lest it might be presumption.

After this, I had many exercises of soul, on account of having to engage in prayer amongst a few friends when we met for worship; but I was very sweetly blessed with the Lord's presence, notwithstanding all my fears. I was favoured to look to the grace of eternal life within, and I found that I had a little light; and, blessed be my covenant God, when the trying hour came, it did not go out; but it shone brighter and brighter. As a vessel that has become very dingy begins, when scoured, to look bright, and a lustre is put upon it, just

so was I done unto by the Lord of life and glory. O how thankful I was that the light which was in me was not darkness, but that it will "shine brighter and brighter until the perfect day." O how I did rejoice in this light! It was the brightness of the glory of God in his dear Son, and of his love, that shone into my soul; for which blessings I desire to praise him through a never-ending eternity, and crown him Lord of all. O what sweet feelings I had; how sweetly resigned to his heavenly will! I was glad to tell other poor souls that came to see me how good the dear Lord was to me, and what great and unspeakable blessings I had received. I was as happy as any poor soul could be on this side of the grave.

But the dear Lord saw fit to give me another stroke with his fatherly rod, which is still steeped in love and blood, and came on me with a very severe pain that continued for six hours. I often cried out, "O how bad it is! O what a very bad pain!" still, sweetly resigned to his sovereign will, I was afraid to ask him to remove it, lest it should be against his blessed pleasure, though all outward means were used that were available. At last, I was obliged to exclaim, "O Lord God! thou hast said thou wilt be inquired of by the house of Israel. If it be agreeable with thy blessed will, do remove this pain; for it is very bad. If it is not displeasing in thy sight, O Lord, do remove it; but, if it is, thy will be done. Lord, grant that what has been tried may do some good; and, if thou wilt be pleased to remove this pain, which is so very bad, thou shalt have all the praise and all the glory." And the blessed Lord was attentive to my cry, and was entreated of a poor worm, and gave me ease.

Ye dear children of the Lord, you that know what it is to have answers to your prayers in the time of great need, you, in some measure, may know that there was great gratitude in my soul. O how I did bless him for his goodness, mercy, compassion, favour, and marvellous loving-kindness to me; that he had pity on me again! O the sweet sense of his pardoning love and mercy to my never-dying soul! The blessed savour of it is still resting upon me. The revelation, the manifestation, the well-ordered covenant, that suffering scene of woe, an almighty and conquering Jesus, my filthy patched-up righteousness being torn from my back and all buried, and a glorious robe put on, the song put into my mouth, and joy and melody into my soul, the bright-shining light and the heavenly armour put on, and the sweet answer to prayer,—O never-to-be-forgotten mysteries of eternal love from an eternal covenant, unchangeable, and everlasting God to such a poor creature! O ye friends of Jesus, all strength fails to tell you the tenth part of the infinite love of God to my soul. All prayer has failed; though I do attempt it, it is not like prayer; for it is all turned into praise to this day. O the many times that I blessed his precious name when I was too weak to say but little else! How good he has been to me all my life long. Not one word has failed of all the good things which he promised. How blessedly he has provided for me, as a God of providence, and has opened the hearts of the friends of the Lord Jesus, and the hearts of those that are quite ignorant of what they are about, to administer to my ne-

cessities. Surely of all the blessings which he has bestowed on the creatures that he has made, mine excel them all. As long as I am spared in this wilderness, I desire to live to his glory. I expect many trials; but I hope never to forget the armour which the dear Lord put upon me, and which so sweetly brings the promise to my soul, that as my days so shall my strength be.

Messrs. Editors,—I know not how to conclude; for it is like the widow's cruse of oil and barrel of meal; and, as it is a song for eternity, we shall never end it in time. My humble prayer is, that the dear Lord will be with you, and bless you with much grace in your souls, and make this a blessing to some of his dear children, for his mercy and truth's sake.

F—.

W. A.

A NUT OR TWO TO CRACK.

Dear Madam, (I wish I could conscientiously address you as "the elect lady,")—I am informed, by your letter, that you have thought of me many times since I saw you at —; and, as to your surprise at me upon the account of my knowledge, I do not wonder at it. You are a witness of this, that if I had not possessed head knowledge, I could not have overthrown your *traditionary* arguments concerning baptism, &c. Traditionary, I call them; for I am sure they are not scriptural; and if your learned men have told you that the original Hebrew or Greek words for baptism will convey the meaning for sprinkling, I deny their assertions. The Hebrew word is *tabal*; its meaning, according to Buxtorf's or Parkhurst's lexicons, is, *to dip, immerse, plunge, cover over, as in water or mud*. The Greek word *baptize* is derived from *baptizo*; its meaning, according to Wahl, Schleusner's, Parkhurst's, and Greenfield's lexicons, is, *to immerse, sink, plunge, cover over*. Should you ever write to me again, I will thank you for your learned men's information upon the subject—from what authority they derive infant sprinkling.

You inform me, in your letter, that you shall be surprised if I am not a preacher. It does not appear to me (should this ever be the case) that it would be an agreeable surprise to you; and, as to your ironical expression, that I appear to have more knowledge than the learned, there is a reality in the appearance. If I had not possessed more knowledge than they, they would have overthrown me many times; but from this portion of Scripture being powerfully applied to my mind, "I will give you a mouth and wisdom, which all your adversaries shall not be able to gainsay nor resist," (Luke xxi. 15,) I do not fear learned men, however argumentative.

Again. You have, in your letter, quoted many portions of Scripture; and you have, in so doing, caused me to think of persons that talk as if there were a large sum of money belonging to them, when, at the same time, they never possessed one farthing; for such promises of Scripture as you have quoted, belong to

weary, heavy-laden, prison-bound characters, and not to such as you. Read the first twelve verses in the fifth chapter of Matthew's gospel, and see whether you answer the description of character that is pronounced blessed, and I believe your own conscience must witness against you. I believe, from your own statement, that you are ignorant even of the plan of salvation. You have said that if you do your part, no doubt the Lord will do his. But if you live and die with this delusion, you will eternally perish, as sure as you have an existence; for the Lord will have no *co-workers* in saving souls. If ever you be saved, you will be saved in the same way as the vilest prostitute on earth; and, should you ever be brought to see what you are as a fallen sinner against God, you will feel the apostle Paul's faithful saying, that "*Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief.*" Then, madam, instead of your viewing yourself as a lovely, virtuous woman, you would not be able to find one upon earth more vile, filthy, and polluted than yourself; and, should this ever be the case with you, you will not write to me in such an ironical, contemptuous manner as you have done. But I know that you have done it through ignorance, however learned you may think yourself.

You have asked me to define or explain the word *grace* from the Greek writings. First, I would remark that as words in general express or explain things, so a knowledge of things will frequently explain or illustrate particular words. Before you or any other person can ever understand the term *grace* aright, you must be taught of God; for I do not believe that any but grace-taught people ever can understand the term so as to be profited by it. I know many persons that have learned the doctrines of grace, as a parrot, by rote; but it is very different persons learning the doctrines, and the doctrines learning the persons. But the primary and principal sense of the term *grace* (the Greek word is *charis*) is *free favour, unmerited kindness*. In this sense it is used most frequently in the Greek Testament; and, as soon as you are brought to know something about the eternal love and favour of Jehovah Jesus, by an experimental acquaintance of the same, you will then understand the term, without a knowledge of Greek or Hebrew. The Almighty teaches all his people, by giving them such a feeling sense of their lost, ruined, undone state, as makes them glad to be saved in his way. And, from these things being feelingly learned, these same people differ from every other sect of men in the world, and they are hated by every other sect; and you are a living witness of the truth of this assertion.

I have given you a short sketch of the term *grace*; and now I will inform you of what the grace of God will do when bestowed upon the people of God's choice. In doing this, I shall not require the help of a lexicon.

The grace of God will cause a drunkard to become a sober man, the Sabbath-breaker to reverence the Lord's Day, the swearer to take heed to his words, the harlot to become a virtuous woman, the thief to become an honest man, and the self-righteous to esteem

all his or her righteousness as filthy rags; and indeed, madam, the grace of God will do the same by the people that receive it as it is said in the Bible it did by the apostles—"These men that have turned the world upside down are come hither also." And the grace of God will turn the people upside down; it will cause the persecutors to lay down their arms. This I am a living witness of; for I was once upon a time such a one as yourself. I hated every one that made a pretence to the doctrines of election; and I not only hated every one of these electionists, (as I termed them,) but I shamefully maltreated some of them; so much so, that they would shun me rather than meet me. But the time arrived for me to be stopped in my mad career; and, instead of my controverting the point with my blasphemy, I became *introverted*, said not a word, but went home with the sentence of death in myself; and with the sentence of death in my soul I lay in God's prison-house, with the chains of guilt rattling in my ears. O the many times Enoch's prophecy has entered me like a dagger! It is recorded in the 14th and 15th verses of the epistle of Jude. These are the words, which I learned by heart, not by rote or hearsay,—“Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousand of his saints, to execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed, (mark the next sentence,) *and of all their hard speeches which ungodly sinners have spoken against him.*” Yes, I was led to see and know that all I had done against God's family, I had done against Christ; and then this would cause every joint to shake, and the sweat to roll down, until I have many times wished that I had never been born. O the midnight wrestlings, the smittings upon my breast, with a “God be merciful to me a sinner!” I dared not look up. I could not think there was mercy for me; and such have been the anguish and distress of my mind, that I really could not make myself sensible whether I was in hell or not. I have risen out of my bed, and felt about the room, before I could convince myself where I was. And ever since I learned the preciousness of that precious portion of God's word, that Christ Jesus came to open the prison doors to them that are bound, or to unloose the prisoners; yes, I say, ever since the blessed time that Jesus did this for me, I have been in love with him; and, although he forgave me my sins, I never can forgive myself. Ofttimes tears of joy flow down my cheeks when the Lord is causing me to look back and remember the way he has led me. It is my firm belief that no one ever knew anything about the preciousness of Jesus until he heard and learned of the Father; and I suppose that you know there is such a portion of Scripture as this, that “they shall all be taught of God;” and every one that hears and learns of the Father comes to Christ, or Christ comes to him. How Christ can be precious to any other people, I am at a loss to know; and, should it ever be your blessed privilege to be taught of God, you will then love the people that you now hate; yes, you will esteem them as the excellent of the earth; you will converse with them, and find them the best grammarians in the

world. Their language, though unpolished, is pathetic; for it is expressive of feeling; and this is the reason you do not understand it. I shall never forget how I contemned John Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*, and applauded Thomas Payne's *Age of Reason*, nor the time I lay in prison. I committed the work which I had applauded to the flames, and then Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress* became a choice work of mine, after I was delivered out of prison. But of all the books, excepting the Bible, I have ever read, some of Huntington's have caused me to weep and rejoice most; and I bless God that ever John Warburton wrote a book.

But I know, madam, that these things will not suit you in your present state of mind. I merely mention them, that should there ever be a divine change wrought in you, perhaps you will purchase the divinity I recommend. Should any part of my letter cause a greater enmity against me, I cannot help it. I have fulfilled your request in answering your letter.

I remain yours,

BROOK'S LETTERS, No. V.

My dear Friend,—As I am going to-morrow, God willing, to London, I am anxious to acknowledge the receipt of your kind remembrance of me.

From the style of your letter, I cannot but hope that the good Spirit of God is with you, though you cannot persuade yourself it is the case. The part of the divine conduct towards those whom he takes out of the world is suitable to the path you are now treading: "I will bring the blind by a way that they knew not, and will lead them in paths that they have not known; I will make darkness light before them, and crooked things straight; these things will I do unto them, and not forsake them." "Hear, ye deaf, and look, ye blind, that ye may see. Who is blind but my servant, or deaf as the messenger that I sent? Who is blind as he that is perfect, and blind as the Lord's servant?" (Isa. xlii. 16.) While the Almighty is discovering to us the darkness and misery of our nature, it is not to be expected that we should see or be happy. The knowledge of ourselves comes from bonds and afflictions. This is the universal language of the Bible. He finds us both blind and deaf, and yet in these matters he glorifies himself; first, by making us feel them, and then by displaying his power in removing them. If you will read the history of the apostles during our Lord's abode in the world, you will see this strikingly manifest. You will find them attending John's ministry at the first set out, and what he preached was the baptism of repentance, directing them to one who should come after. No sooner did he point him out, than they sought for him, and told one another, "We have found him of whom Moses in the law and the prophets did write, Jesus of Nazareth, the Son of Joseph." Yet were they both blind and deaf. You find them long after this grievously confounded, in the dark, and unable to hear or receive

many things when he testified of his sufferings. "These things were hid from them;" they could not understand nor bear many things our Lord testified; yet there were two things plainly discovered in them; one was faith in God, without clear views of a Mediator, and confidence in him. The truth is, they were in legal bondage, and under a feeling sense of the depravity of their hearts; therefore our Lord says, "Let not your heart be troubled; ye believe in God, believe also in me." They were troubled. They believed in God; that was the cause. He exhorted them to faith in himself, for he knew that they had a second thing, which was faith and love towards himself. But how faint these were we can see very clearly. Yet they possessed them; for our Lord testifies of it to the Father. "They have," says he, "believed that I came forth from thee, and have known surely that thou hast sent me." Yet all this is far short of access unto the Father, with confidence in the Son. They had not faith in him as their eternal portion. Hence, it does not appear that they could or did pray with much energy. Our dear Saviour tells them, "Hitherto ye have asked nothing in my name; ask, and ye shall receive." They did not plead powerfully to the great Mediator, which alone is a proof of their low estate—their fears and bondage, their distance from God, their distrust and doubts concerning him.

I could open this subject to a great extent, for it has dwelt much upon my mind. We are often led to suppose that the apostles grew wonderfully, and being with their Redeemer in the flesh, had extraordinary power. But if we read their history attentively, we shall find to the last (I mean till the outpouring of the Holy Ghost) that they were just alive, and that was all. I wish my dear friend would consider this. It is clear to my mind. When I return from London, perhaps I may trouble you with some meditations upon it.

I can truly say, I feel deeply for you. You are more remembered than ever. I too was tried with outward things, for God began to cut me before I had entered much into life. The clergy will prove desperate foes; and you must be shy with dissenters. Keep much by yourself, and be careful how you open yourself to any one. You will never repent of silence. Take my word for it, and the word of God: "Be swift to hear, slow to speak." God will try you in body. He has tried me sharply, and does to this day. He will try you with circumstances in your family also. Being wounded, everything will gall you. The contempt of your brethren, family matters, your church duty, your school, and your circumstances in various ways, will stir up peevishness, fretfulness, and discontentment, so that you will choose "strangling, and death rather than life." The church service used to make me almost mad; so did my family, and a variety of things to which I was subject. I assisted my father in the school a little, and the poor boys would feel my anguish and bitterness sadly.

I beseech you again and again to carry your complaints to nobody but God. I would not trust an individual in — with one single feeling. Consider what I say. I can tell you one thing, your let-

ters savour more of divine teaching than any I could write for years after God began a work upon me; and this is no small consolation and support to my mind that God is with you. Accept a piece of advice. In preaching, insist upon the purity and righteousness of God, and the depravity of man. If you feel barren and lifeless, there are a hundred texts to bear you out, and God will open them to you, which will be profitable.

With regard to Mr. H's spirit, I felt just as you do, and have made up my mind in this way. He is raised up at a time when hypocrisy is universal, and spreading daily. Professors have treated him at a scandalous rate. He therefore rebukes them sharply; and as much of his labours are employed in this way, his personal feelings will mix; and when you consider his irritable temper by nature, you will rather admire the grace of God in suffering him to show so little of it, than regret there is so much. Besides, hypocrites of his own church carry tales and influence his mind. I have been with him when the conversation of a day has been little more than bringing forward professors, and hewing them to pieces before the Lord. This is not always profitable. However, I cannot find that he goes to the length that scripture warrants. Ezekiel, Jeremiah, and others who lived in much such times, exceed him in severity. And David says, "The sons of Belial shall be all of them as thorns thrust away; because they cannot be taken with hands; but the man that shall touch them must be fenced with iron and the staff of a spear." This witness is true, my dear friend.

May the Lord of Israel bless thee. So prays, thine affectionately,
Brighton, August, 1805. W. J. BROOK.

JOHN CALVIN ON THE KNOWLEDGE OF GOD AND OF OURSELVES.

The whole sum, in a manner, of all our wisdom, which only ought to be accounted true and perfect wisdom, consisteth of two parts, that is to say, the knowledge of God, and of ourselves. But whereas these two knowledges be with many bonds linked together; yet whether goeth before or engendereth the other, it is hard to discern. For first, no man can look upon himself but he must needs by and by turn all his senses to the beholding of God, in whom he liveth, and is moved: because it is plain, that those gifts wherewith we be endued, are not of ourselves; yea, even that we have being is nothing else but an essence in the one God. Finally, by these good things that are as by drop-meal poured into us from heaven, we are led as it were by certain streams to the spring head. And so by our own neediness better appeareth that infinite plenty of good things that abideth in God. Specially that miserable ruin, whereinto the fall of the first man hath thrown us, compelleth us to lift up our eyes, not only being foodless and hungry, to crave from thence that which we lack; but also being awakened with fear, to learn humility. For as there is found in man a certain world of all miseries, and since we have been spoiled of the Divine apparel, our shameful nakedness discloseth an

infinite heap of filthy disgracements. It must needs be that every man be pricked with knowledge in conscience of his own unhappiness, to make him come at the least unto some knowledge of God. So by the understanding of our ignorance, vanity, beggary, weakness, perverseness, and corruption, we learn to reknowledge, that no where else but in the Lord abideth the true light of wisdom, sound virtue, perfect abundance of all good things, and purity of righteousness. And so by our own evils we are stirred to consider the good things of God; and we cannot earnestly aspire toward him, until we begin to dislike ourselves. For of all men, what one is there that would not willingly rest in himself? Yea, who doth not rest, so long as he knoweth not himself, that is to say; so long as he is contented with his own gifts, and ignorant or unmindful of his own misery? Therefore every man is by the knowledge of himself, not only pricked forward to seek God, but also led as it were by the hand to find him.

Again, it is certain that man never cometh unto the true knowledge of himself, unless he hath first beholden the face of God, and from beholding thereof do descend to look into himself. For (such is the pride that is naturally planted in us) we always think ourselves righteous, innocent, wise, and holy, until that with manifest proof we be convinced of our unrighteousness, filthiness, folly, and uncleanness. But we are not convinced thereof, if we look upon ourselves only, and not upon God also, who is the only rule whereby this judgment ought to be tried. For because we are naturally inclined to hypocrisy, therefore a certain vain resemblance of righteousness doth abundantly content us instead of righteousness indeed. And because there appeareth nothing among us, nor about us, that is not defiled with much filthiness, therefore that which is somewhat less filthy pleaseth us as though it were most pure, so long as we hold ourselves within the bounds of man's uncleanness. Like as the eye which is used to see nothing but black, thinketh that to be pure white, which yet is but darkish white or brown. Yea, we may yet more plainly discern by our bodily sense how much we are blinded in considering the powers of the soul. For if at mid-day we either look down upon the ground, or behold those things that round about lie open before our eyes, then we think ourselves to have very assured and piercing force of sight: but when we look up to the sun, and behold it with fixed eyes, then that same sharpness that was of great force upon the ground is with so great brightness by and by dazzled and confounded, that we are compelled to confess that the same sharp sight which we had in considering earthly things, when it cometh to the sun, is but mere dulness. Even so cometh it to pass in weighing our spiritual good things. For while we look no further than the earth, so long being contented with our own righteousness, wisdom, and strength, we do sweetly flatter ourselves, and think us in manner half gods. But if we once begin to raise up our thoughts unto God, and to weigh what a one he is, and how exact is the perfection of his righteousness, wisdom, and power, after the rule whereof we ought to be framed; then that which before did please us in ourselves with false pretence of righteousness, shall become loathsome to us as

greatest wickedness; then that which did marvellously deceive us under colour of wisdom, shall stink before us as extreme folly; then that which did bear the face of strength, shall be proved to be most miserable weakness. So slender doth that which in us seemeth even most perfect, answer in proportion to the pureness of God.

Hereof proceedeth that trembling and amazedness, wherewith the scripture in many places reciteth that the holy men were stricken and astonished, so oft as they perceived the presence of God. For when we see that they, which in his absence did stand assured and unmoved, as soon as he discloseth his glory begin so to quake, and are so dismayed, that they fall down, yea, are swallowed up, and in manner are destroyed with fear of death, it is to be gathered thereby, that man is never sufficiently touched and inwardly moved with knowledge of his own baseness, until he have compared himself with the majesty of God. But of such dismay we have often examples both in the Judges and in the Prophets: (Judg. xiii. 22; Isa. vi. 5; Ezek. ii. 1;) so that this was a common saying among the people of God, "We shall die, because the Lord hath appeared unto us." And, therefore, the history of Job, to throw men down with knowledge of their own folly, weakness, and uncleanness, bringeth away his principal proof from describing God's wisdom, strength, and cleanness: And that not without cause. For we see how Abraham, (Gen. xxi. 17,) the nearer that he came to behold the glory of God, the better acknowledged himself to be earth and dust. We see how Elias could not abide to tarry his coming to him with uncovered face: so terrible is the beholding of him. And what may a man do that is but corruption and a worm, when even the cherubims for very fear must hide their faces? Even this is it that the prophet Isaiah speaketh of, "The sun shall blush, and the moon shall be ashamed, when the Lord of hosts shall reign;" that is to say, when he displayeth his brightness, and bringeth it nearer to sight, then in comparison thereof the brightest thing of all shall be darkened.—*Instit. book 1. chap. 1. edit. 1634.*

MEDITATIONS ON DEATH AND ETERNITY.

One night, as I lay in bed, with my head on my pillow, my mind was led into a train of thought about death and eternity. A few years more, thought I, at most, and I shall go down to the silent chambers of the grave; and how will it be with me then? Am I a child of God? What proof have I that my soul is made alive by God the Holy Ghost, and that I am redeemed by the precious blood of Christ; and wherein do I differ from a moral professor? I tried to find some evidence in proof of my being a living soul, but could find none; and the devil set in upon me so powerfully, that I was loaded in my poor soul to that degree with darkness and bondage, that my heart seemed too large for the place allotted for it in my body. I tried to pray, but could not get any vent for my feelings at all. It seemed as if the whole host of hell were surrounding me; and as if the old serpent were let loose, and

standing by my bedside. The misery of soul I then endured, my tongue can never express, or my pen describe. "What!" thought I, "have I really been all this time deceived by the devil; and shall I go to hell after all? Has my faith been a dead faith all this time? As I am such a fool, and the devil such a cunning enemy, I may, thought I, have been deceived by him; and there is some difference now, after all, between me and a real living soul; yet I scarcely know what that difference is." I was afraid my convictions had been only natural, and that which I had thought to be liberty was only sparks of my own kindling. On arriving at this conclusion, I threw one of my arms over the side of the bedstead, and seemed as if I were talking to Satan; and I said to him, in bitterness of soul, "Devil, thou art but a lost spirit, and thou hast no right to torment me; for I shall be no worse off than thou art." The horror of my mind was such that I was all over in a profuse perspiration, and my clothes were quite wet. O the fiery darts of the devil! He did in very deed come in like a flood, and swept away all my peace, comfort, happiness, joy, and confidence; and I found what it was to be shut up, and not able to come forth.

But, while thus sunk into the deepest mire, and feeling as if it were all over with me, a thought came into my mind, that the devil, though he could counterfeit faith, peace, hope, and joy, yet he could *not* counterfeit *love*. This took me back, step by step, to the time when the Lord, many years ago, by his precious blood, delivered my soul from under the curse of his law, and removed the load of guilt off my conscience which I had laboured under for about nine months. The blessed Lord then brought home to my soul the following words: "He is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth." I thought I did love the Lord *then*, if I never had *since*. And when these thoughts travelled through my mind, the Lord began to break the snare, and move the powers of my poor soul. I began to rise a little; and my heart went out after the Lord. And very soon the Lord Jesus came and brought my soul up, and not only *up*, but *out* of the horrible pit. I then told Satan that he was a chained foe; that he could do no more than my Lord would let him do; and that all he did, my loving Lord Christ would make work for my good. So he was but a servant to my Lord, after all. O how the goodness of the Lord did melt my heart down into tenderness and love. I could then say again, with Peter, that the Lord knew that I *did* love him, and why,—because he *first* loved me, and warmed my heart by his love. Here my soul had another proof of God's unchangeable love; for if God's love could change, he must have taken it from me.

O the workings of the old man of sin! Who knows the plague of the heart but they who have had its corrupt fountain worked upon by the devil? O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and love of God,—Father, Son, and Holy Ghost! How unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!

The dear Lord was very good in shining again upon such a poor

worm. Then did I praise and love his precious name again; and felt again the dew of his fulness, and had another sight of my name being in the Lamb's book of life, and of my interest with him in the covenant made from all eternity. I could lay a firm hold on him as my Beloved, and say, with the church of old, Though I am as black, in my nature, as the tents of Kedar, yet, in Jesus, I am as comely as the curtains of Solomon; washed in his blood, and clothed in his righteousness. "Unto Him that loved us and washed us from our sins in his own blood, be glory and praise for ever and ever. Amen."

I. H.

A LETTER FROM THE LATE DR. HAWKER TO MR. NUNN. EXTRACTED FROM NUNN'S MEMOIRS.

I greet you, my dear Brother in the Lord among the choice ones of his flock. Grace be with you.

Hither your letter hath followed me; where, with my three daughters, (one is not,) I am come for the renovation of my bodily health. "He giveth power to the faint; and to them that have no might he increaseth strength." (Isaiah xl. 29.) Four whole months the Lord hath called me aside. Many a sweet season I have had during that interval; and the opening of the invisible world, in communion with the holy Three-in-One, hath oft refreshed my spirits. I have lain whole nights sleepless, but not restless; each glorious Person in the Godhead making gracious manifestations of each and all. So that, as John the Baptist said, I could, and did set to my seal, that God is true. Indeed, my dear brother, here are the effects of vital union and godliness. Well might Hezekiah set it down as a truth, and refer it to the Lord, that by these things men live, and in this is the life of every regenerate spirit. And, while I am upon this subject, suffer me to observe yet further that after all outward ministrations, this is the infallible evidence of inward enjoyments.

I am glad to hear you say, "We have additions, every now and then, to our private assemblies; and, in the exercise of love, we often meet to converse with the Lord, and with each other." My dearest brother, let not the blossoming of spring be counted upon; much will fall off. Too much of self mingles with all we say or do. Self is the great idol. There needs no lookers-on in our interviews with the Lord. Jesus loves abstractions. Those divine verses are but little studied, Sol. Song viii. 11 to the end. I should be more delighted, if I were with you, to see the choice ones of the flock turning aside from the prayer-meeting to enjoy the whole of the sacred Three, alone and in private. I hope that you yourself have calculated upon it; and, if you have, sure I am that the arithmetic will prove my statement. Jesus loves to be first consulted, first spoken to, and alone. Jesus doth not like your secrets at second hand. See what a beautiful example of this is set forth in the life of David. (2 Sam. vii. throughout.) And so much stress God the Holy Ghost lays upon it, that he hath made a second record of it in his blessed word.

(1 Chron. xvii.) Regeneration, which is the opening of the new life, brings the soul into a holy familiarity with the Lord. As children in nature so in grace; from the first lisping of the babe, "Father," to the intimacy of grown-up youth, the relationship ripens in effect. We go in and out, as the Lord blessedly expresses it, and find pasture.

It is my grief, my dear brother, when the day is closing in, that I have not had so much of the goings forth of my soul upon each of the Persons in the Godhead as their unceasing love and manifestations to me might be justly supposed to have awakened. "I the Lord do keep it; I will water it every moment: lest any hurt it, I will keep it night and day." (Isaiah xxvii. 3.) I desire, indeed, to discover my deficiency; for a state of insolvency suits my state and circumstances. Nevertheless, there is somewhat truly blessed when, amidst the rubbish of our carnal nature, we discover the soul sending forth her longings after the Lord, and feel those hungerings of the soul which men in health feel, in nature, for their seasons of refreshment to feed the body. (Ps. xxvii. 4; Isa. xxvi. 8, 9; Ps. lxiii. 1—8.) Here is the whole familiarity of real acquaintance, which proves friendship. "The child of God takes God by the hand, at first sight, in meeting him, as a man doth a friend whom he hath long known. And what will be the blessedness of open vision in the other world but the realizing of those delights which now, by faith, we are supposed to enjoy?"

I check myself from prosecuting this subject further. Wherefore have I gone so far, but to excite my brother to caution in his estimate of man by outward appearances? Very sure I am that if my church were to be sifted, and He whose eyes are as a flaming fire were to come in our midst, to separate the precious from the vile, there would be more than I can calculate like those of whom Jesus spake, John vi. 66.

You will not expect to hear from me for some time. Writing is become troublesome. The grasshopper is a burden. Commend me to dear Mrs. N—. The Lord make her more and more a true yoke-fellow, and bless you both with your dear children.

Yours truly in the Lord,

Totness, (the place of exile from Charles

ROBERT HAWKER.

during the Lord's pleasure,) April 25th, 1826.

"IF GOD BE FOR US, WHO CAN BE AGAINST US?"

To the family of God meeting for the worship of their adorable Lord in St. George's-Road, Manchester.

Dear Brethren,—Through the tender mercies of the Lord, I am still in the path of life; and though I find it a path of tribulation, I am in some solemn, and, at times, sweet measure enabled to unite with Moses, choosing "rather to suffer affliction with the people of God than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season," esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than all the treasures of the world. I would rather have my name cast out as evil to my dying moment by men who can boast of their high attainments, and who scorn the

trials and troubles, groans and sighs, doubts and fears of God's people, or by those who can deny the possibility of God's people ever, in any measure, backsliding; I would rather suffer all that the scorn of such men's hearts can bring forth, than be one with them.

* * * * *

The wonders of the grace of a Three-One God surpass all our powers to comprehend, and his gracious Majesty takes the advantage of dark ways and proceedings to make more and more of the wonders of his grace known. I should never have known as much as I do, little as that is, of the wonders of God's providence and grace, if it had not been for trials, and some of them trials from false brethren; and I must say, that I have had reason to bless God that he suffered them to take place. O the blessedness of proving, in the life and power of it, that God is a very present help in trouble! If trouble-makers knew the blessed advantage the Lord takes of their proceedings, for the purpose of making known his power, love, and glory to those whom they trouble, they would have but little room for gladness. But there must rise up erroneous men, who produce heresies among the people of God, that those which are approved may be made manifest. I have proved the truth of this more than once. I hope the dear Lord will keep both you and me much in prayer, and at his dear feet, leaning upon his bosom, seeking wisdom, grace, and strength from him alone. The Lord only is able to direct us aright, and to bless us, and keep us with a good conscience towards God and man. Remember, my dear friends, the Lord of the house has told us that "there shall arise false Christs and false prophets, and shall show great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect." (Matt xxiv. 24.) And indeed, they shall deceive many professors.

Now, my friends, as all things are possible to them that believe, the man who can in his own view always believe, and can set at nought the fears and faintings, groans and sighs, pantings and mournings of God's poor tried children, must be one of those wonder-working prophets; and the dear Lord says, "Take heed that no man deceive you." (Matt. xxiv. 4.) Again: "Take heed *what* you hear." (Mark iv. 24.) And again: "Take heed *how* you hear." (Luke viii. 18.) Now, my dear friends, in the name and fear of the Lord, I entreat you to endeavour to look to the Lord for wisdom to direct you, and do not trust your own hearts, nor lean to your own understanding; for however men may boast of faith and happiness, all faith and happiness that does not stand in the life and power of God is but delusion, and the stronger it is, the greater is the delusion. May God Almighty enable you to be watchful, prayerful, and cautious; and pray for me, that the Lord may be with me and bless me with much of his sweet presence and love. I feel myself a poor fool, and wonder that the Lord will take so much pains with such a crawling worm; but "his mercy is for ever sure." Bless his precious name, he gave my soul a blessed lift on Lord's day morning, with a sweet application of that text: "If God be for us, who can be against us?" Honours crown his

blessed brow, he is more than a match for men and devils, and his people shall prove that he will overrule all things for their good. His gracious Majesty takes advantage of the horrible workings of corrupt nature, to show us how vile we are, and the ability of Jesus to save. Nevertheless, when men can trifle with sin, and say, "O, what is sin! it is a mere nothing," &c., such men prove that however high they are in doctrine, they have not had a solemn soul-visit to Gethsemane. They must be total strangers to fellowship with the sufferings of Christ. To have a true feeling sense of our vileness, and a precious application of the atonement to the conscience of such a vile sinner, is a path that such men are strangers to. May you and I be more deeply acquainted with that religion which sickens us of self, and stands in the power of God, and leads us in very deed to give God all the glory of salvation; that religion which keeps us from self boasting and leads us to glorify the Lord; then come what will, all must be well. I hope the dear Lord is with Mr. G—, and that you and he enjoy some sweet moments in the love and fear of the Lord. God willing, I expect to be at home for the 18th of June, and I hope that the Lord will come with me, and enable both the church and myself to act in the name of the Lord Jesus.

Wishing you all the blessed teaching of the Lord, and much of his love and presence, I remain, your loving pastor,

London, May 27, 1843.

W. GADSBY.

"THE NATURAL MAN RECEIVETH NOT THE THINGS OF THE SPIRIT OF GOD."

Dear Friend,—I have been longing for an opportunity to write to you, but have not been able until now. My mind has been deeply engaged for nearly three years past, at times, about a certain doctrine, in which I have but lately been set at rest. I have never been left satisfied to take things upon trust in religious matters; therefore, until I have had some divine satisfaction, I could not recommend, with confidence, that which I had not received into a good conscience.

Nearly three years since, a certain doctrine came under my consideration, from a much respected party, upon the subject of the Trinity and the personality of the Son of God. It was this, first, that the term "personality," with respect to any part of the blessed Trinity, was anti-scriptural and anti-christian; secondly, that the nature of Christ was altogether a spiritual creation before the world was, and even was what it was, what it is, and what it will be, without the least change, except in appearance; and this is all that Christ is.

I have been so distressed about these things, at times, as to be quite overpowered, especially of late; but, having no refuge but a kind God, it has been with great wrestlings and many love-tokens that the thing is settled.

As to the doctrine of a Trinity of Persons in the Godhead, I feel that the foundations of my hopes are built upon it. I have felt the distinctions blessedly in my soul, by the working of that almighty Spirit that regenerated me at first; and I solemnly believe that it is

the blessed will of God to reveal himself to his poor children in this way, for their comfort and consolation in this wilderness, that he is Christ's Father, and their Father; that Christ is the elder-born, and they the younger branches; that Christ is God, and that his godhead is uncreated, underived, and equal with the Father; that the blessed Spirit is also a Person breathing forth upon the saints and into them all their gifts and graces, according to the covenant; that these three Persons are one in nature, one in power, and one in glory; and that they are inconceivably related to each other in person, work, and office, and manifestly and equally related to the church of God in Christ. These things lay the foundation of all my poor soul's hopes and expectations, and also of my daily and hourly meditations; and, through these things, the dear Lord shows me his glory in ten thousand different ways, and cheers and illuminates my dreary path, sometimes frequently even in one day, and owns and blesses his word by his poor instrument, as many can testify; and all is communicated through the knowledge of God our Father and our Lord Jesus Christ. The endearing assurance which I have of these things I would not part with for stores of gold and silver. Through these things, the Scriptures are unfolded, and the judgments of God enrich my mind, and make even the dark providences of God delightful. It is a deep that coucheth under, a height that excels all excellency, a length and breadth that outstretches itself beyond the limits of our fallen reason, and a fit subject only for the revelation of that Spirit who is God over all, blessed for evermore. While, on the contrary, those critical, brain-stretching ideas, that the Spirit is only the breath of Christ, called God because of the power of it; that Christ is God only by some super-angelic order of early creation, and that he was made out in the appearance of flesh at Jerusalem, and in appearance only; that, as for the Father, it is only a term of illustration; and that we shall never know anything of revelation, are errors out of which arise an abundance of particulars which serve for numerous speculations, but which leave the soul barren, the mind frozen, the understanding bewildered, and the affections cold; which breed strifes, not only among the people of God in general, but even among those who adopt them; so that "Babel" (confusion) must ever remain the motto enstamped upon all that is not of God.

In my late trials upon the subject, the dear Lord gave me most distinctly to feel that the Father loveth me, that the Son loveth me also, and that they come and make their abode with me; and that the Spirit, being come already, maketh room for the arrival of the other two. Therefore, through the presence of the Spirit, I have given to me a dwelling with the Father and the Son; I in him, and he in me, and they in me, and I in them.

O wonderful abyss! If my reason, or the reason of any man, can enter into these things, then reason is not fallen, and the Scriptures are not true; for reason is natural, even from its original. But "the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit," for this very cause, because they are discerned only by the Spirit of God; and reason is not the Spirit of God. I would ask every man who makes a profes-

sion of religion these questions: How do you know what you understand of the things of God? Is it by the Spirit of power coming upon you, or is it by your reason? If reason is your ground, why do you condemn revelation? Because the creature is the source of your information, and pride is the glory of it, you rejoice in your boastings; and all such rejoicings are evil. The things which the Spirit reveals are hidden by the clouds of sense and reason, and often obscured even to their possessors; yet they are all brightened up in the morning, and held fast only by the Holy Ghost. (2 Tim. i. 14.) The things which reason holds abide with reason, but sink in death where reason gives place to revelation, both in the just and in the unjust.

Thou dear Lord Jesus Christ, have I not seen and felt thee plucking me as a brand from the fire, even body and soul, by taking both into union with thy own dear self? O safe abode! I dwell in God before I have a natural being! Dear Lord, have I not followed thee in the regeneration? Thou blessed Spirit, thou hast baptized me into Christ many times, and led me to acknowledge the same publicly in water-baptism in the name of that same blessed Christ. Have I not found myself as fixed there by the love, purpose, power, and glory of our Father? My dear Father, have I not met thee many times in thy blessed Christ, and talked with thee as a man talketh with his friend, even as thou didst with Abraham? And shall I, or can I be persuaded out of these things by poor, barren, fallen man, however loved and respected otherwise? Lord, to whom should I go? Thou hast the words of eternal life. I feel that I have fellowship with thee. What shall I say of fellowship? O blessed fellowship! I feel that to part with the doctrine would be to part with thee, my Life, my All. Could I but embrace with my soul what I can clearly comprehend in my reason, (even as others comprehend it,) in my present condition, as a poor, tempted, tried servant of Jesus Christ, I should be overwhelmed in black despair in a moment. God is witness.

Dear friend, I think that by this time you will be aware that I have had something to occupy my mind besides writing to you, and that you will excuse my seeming neglect.

I am, yours in the bowels of Christ Jesus,

Feb. 10, 1843.

G. M.

EDITORS' REVIEW.

Memoirs of the late William Nunn, nearly twenty-three years Minister of Clement's Church, Manchester. By Robert Pym, Rector of Elmley.—London: Hamilton, Adams, and Co. 1842.

(Continued from page 223.)

It appears that at this period of his life Mr. Nunn was in the habit of keeping a diary, which is preserved, and from which Mr. Pym has made some copious extracts. We have looked carefully over them to see what convictions of sin, and what deep discoveries of

his heart he had after his first beginning, and we must say they are very scanty. Mr. Nunn's doctrines very widely separated him from the evangelical clergy and the general dissenters, but his experience did not much differ, and a parallel to his diary may be found in scores of "Christian Guardians," and "Evangelical Magazines."

A diary must always be a most partial and imperfect record of a man's experience. An honest diary would be unreadable; and we believe no man durst commit to writing a tenth part of what passed in the chambers of imagery. We therefore do not put much value upon religious diaries, and would not measure a man's experience by them. When, then, we say that the following extract is about the best we can find of a feeling sense of ruin and helplessness, we by no means wish to insinuate that Mr. N. had no deeper experience of them. In soul trouble a man will keep no diaries; and if he should keep them, he will make no entries on the days when his spirit faints within him. Groans and sighs will then be his entries, and if they enter into the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth, it is far better than an entry into a book.

"Oct. 1st. Had a few sweet interviews with God this day; but, ungrateful wretch that I am, when a sweet opportunity offered, instead of coming to Christ with love and gratitude, I listened to the Tempter, who beguiled me with wanderings of mind. Things of this world rushed in at the door of delusion and robbed my soul of the joys to which it was called. O! when will it be that these tempters are overcome? Who shall release my soul from the body of this death? Lord, I would come to thee! Help me, Lord! Lord, save, or I perish!"

We have before intimated that there was a great indistinctness in his experience. Considering how very clear he was in doctrine, we might have expected a corresponding clearness in experience; but we cannot find it in these memoirs.

And yet, amidst all the shallowness and indistinctness of his experience, we see at this period of his life, as recorded in his diary, sincerity, reality, and other evidences of a divine change. His heart was evidently taken up with divine things, and he counted all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ.

The indistinctness of his experience at this time is strikingly manifest in the two following extracts:

"Nov. 2nd. Commenced my studies. My manner of life in temporal pursuits being changed, my mind seemed affected, and I did not feel comfortable. *Jesus was revealed in the evening.* I felt my deadness; may it stir me up more earnestly to consider Christ as the altogether precious. How faint are my conceptions of the meritorious work of the dear Redeemer. Lord, increase my faith!"

"Nov. 4th. In the first day, it appears, God separated the light from the darkness, and so it is in the first work of grace begun in the heart of a penitent; his darkened mind, suffering under the blackness of darkness by reason of sin, his ideas without any solid form, and his whole soul void of any thing that is good. Now, by the Spirit of God moving over his heart, and the light of the glorious gospel, as revealed in Jesus, shining in upon his soul, he has life, motion, and vigour implanted, and he lives to the glory of God. O my soul, art thou really susceptible of this wonderful change? If so, be thankful. Well mayest thou exclaim, 'What hath God wrought?'"

In the first of these extracts he says, "Jesus was revealed in the

evening," and then adds, "How faint are my conceptions," &c. "Lord, increase my faith." But if Jesus was revealed in his soul that evening, why these complaints, why this petition? Surely he cannot mean by "a revelation of Jesus" what we understand by the expression. His presence banishes all complaints, and turns prayer into praise.

In the second extract he speaks of "the first work of grace begun in the heart of the penitent" as consisting in "the light of the glorious gospel as revealed in Jesus shining in upon his soul." But where is the work of the law then? Where is conviction, guilt, and condemnation?

It is true that the first day's work is typical of the beginning of a work of grace. But what did that light discover? A wild chaos of confusion, and nothing more.

Mr. Nunn, soon after this, goes to Cambridge, for the purpose of becoming a clergyman. Whilst there his views became more formed, and one which he retained unshaken through his life, the constant assurance of faith as a believer's privilege. We give an extract from his diary:

"Two questions have been starting up in my mind; one whether it is the will of God that a Christian should ever doubt his interest in Christ? and another whether any Christian that we read of in holy writ, was ever under such a doubt? A third question arises out of them, whether it is possible for believers of the present day to live without such doubting? How often do some say, of whom we have reason to believe they are regenerate, '*If I am a child of God; If I am to reach my home,*' &c. Now it seems to me that it is not the will of God that a Christian should doubt; *because it cannot be pleasing in his sight to doubt his word.* I do not remember any instance in the Scriptures of a Christian doubting his soul was safe. And, lastly, I think a Christian may live here without much fear. A sense of his depravity, and the bitter experience of indwelling sin, are enough to keep him from presumption; but, at the same time, that good hope through grace will not, I think, leave him, because it is a living principle; it may be weak, but it cannot expire. And so although he may not be much upon the mount, yet, I think, if he does but examine the foundation of his hope, he must conclude that he belongs to Christ. *As for myself, I have never seemed to want that evidence.* What I want, and want very much, is to have a constant, steady, and enlarged view of my interest in Christ Jesus."

We would call our readers' attention to two passages in the above extract which we have marked in italics. Mr. N. seems to mistake the ground of doubt in the heart of many of the living family. They do not doubt God's *word*, but they doubt God's *work*. God's promises they know to be sure. They do not doubt them. "But has God quickened *their* souls into spiritual life?"—*that* is the grand point of doubt with them.

Of himself, Mr. N. says "he *never* seemed to want that evidence." We think this is about the worst sentence that we have read in the book. If he never wanted that evidence, he could never want testimonies and manifestations. If there were no doubts, there were needed no love-visits or love-smiles to shine them away.

Mr. Pym has made some comments upon this extract:

"Our dear brother," he says, "retained to the end unchanged the opinions here recorded by him on this subject. It was one which was very frequently

discussed among the members of his private church at Manchester at their weekly meetings. A difference of opinion existed among them on the subject, and this led to its being again and again brought forward. Mr. N. gave his opinion on these occasions much in the same strain of ideas as he here left on record in the more early days of his Christian course. He never took upon himself to deny the possibility of Christians doubting their interest in Christ after that it had once been clearly revealed to their faith. This he would not do; he was jealous of adding in this way to the fears and doubts of the timid among the Lord's family. But he much doubted whether those who brought their own cases forward in proof of the opinions advocated by them on this subject were, in reality, in such a case *as to be without any hope with regard to the future.*"

We would not, however, be too hard upon detached expressions. And we are inclined to think that Mr. Nunn, as well as Mr. Pym, has confounded two distinct things—a sufficient degree of hope to keep the soul from despair, and the assurance of faith. To identify these two things is the same mistake as it would be to say there was no difference between a parish pauper, preserved from starving by a work-house dietary, and the late Mr. Arkwright, who died worth millions. And if Mr. N. could not "remember any instance in the Scriptures of a Christian doubting that his soul was safe," his memory must have been very bad. When one cries, "Let not the pit shut her mouth upon me," another, "My hope thou hast removed like a tree," a third, "My hope is perished from the Lord," they certainly were not in the full assurance of faith. That a saint never was in total despair we readily admit; but there is a vast difference between having no hope and enjoying a full assurance.

But this is a part of that general indistinctness which seems to us to have characterized Mr. Nunn's ministry. He was clear enough upon the doctrines of grace, but in experience he seems to have been very confused and indistinct. All God's living family were called "believers," and no lines of separation drawn between different states and stages of experience. Many fish like to swim in muddy waters; and there is a large class of professors of truth who love an indistinct ministry. It fosters their self-delusion, it stirs up no painful doubts, it does not cut them down from giants into babes, nor throw them headlong from their pinnales into the dust of death. They are not cut down by a ministry clear in doctrine. On the contrary, the truths of the gospel cannot be too clearly stated for them. But distinct lines in experience, so clearly traced out that they cannot but see where they are, the cutting down of all religion that stands in the flesh, the exposing of false refuges, the minute dissection of natural faith and to what heights it may mount, of cobweb hopes and their false foundation, of feigned love and the sacrifices it may endure; such a real experimental ministry as this will certainly offend a large class of professors, for whom no doctrines are too high, and no statement of them too clear.

But this was not Mr. Nunn's ministry. Bold as he was in doctrinal statements, his very boldness delighted many whom half his boldness in experimental statements would have driven out of the place. Clear as he was in his "views," had he been half as clear in viewing the depths of human hypocrisy, and half as earnest in bringing his heavy artillery to bear upon the consciences of his hearers,

many who heard him gladly would have turned away from him in disgust.

We are not here blaming Mr. Nunn, or casting any reflection on his memory. He was what God made him, and filled up that place in the vineyard which was appointed for him. He conscientiously ministered according to the ability which God gave him,—and, free from time-serving, fear of man, and love of filthy lucre, laboured zealously, and, we doubt not, in a measure, successfully in word and doctrine.

We conclude our notice of these memoirs by extracting from them Mr. Nunn's account of the providential leadings which guided his feet to Manchester:

“It so happened that when about to leave Foleshill, to come over to Manchester, I went the preceding night to Coventry, and slept at the house of my friend, Mr. Russell, in order that I might be ready to obtain a place on one of the coaches which passes through that place. Anxious to be in time, I arose in the morning between four and five o'clock, and my friend, Mr. Russell accompanied me to the coach office. While waiting in the street for the arrival of the coach, he said to me, ‘I think I know a gentleman in Manchester who can give you information about these churches. I have, when in Manchester, done business with him.’ We were then near to a large shop where they were taking stock, and had in consequence opened their shop thus early. ‘I will step in here,’ said he, ‘and write one.’ He did so, gave it to me, and in a few minutes the coach arrived. When at Manchester, finding appearances so much against me, I never thought it at all needful to go to the gentleman to whom the letter of introduction was addressed. But, singular enough, after I had preached on the Sunday morning at St. Luke's, I went to dine with Mr. Smyth and his family. At the dinner table our conversation turned upon Sunday schools, and while discoursing, Mrs. Smyth said, ‘Mr. William Townend is a great promoter of them.’ ‘Who?’ said I. She repeated the name. ‘Why,’ said I, ‘I have a note in my pocket for a gentleman of that name.’ ‘Why did you not give it to him?’ she replied. I said, ‘I have not seen him. For of what use can it be my making any further inquiry about the probability of my coming here, seeing £1000 are wanted for the church of St. Clement's.’ ‘Oh, but you have seen him,’ she replied; ‘that was Mr. William Townend who came into the vestry to you after service.’ ‘Indeed,’ said I. ‘Yes,’ she said; ‘and do you give him the letter this afternoon, for he will be again at church.’ I did so, and Mr. Townend, seeing it was a letter from a customer, very politely invited me to his house, where I slept; and, having to return to Foleshill, to fulfil an engagement in the neighbourhood on the following Sunday—namely, to preach for a Sunday school, I wished to leave Manchester as soon as I could, for I had much to attend to in the intervening days; accordingly I rose early, and Mr. Townend being accustomed to do the same, we had a great deal of conversation respecting St. Clement's; he suggested my returning to Manchester, and trying whether subscriptions could be raised, for purchasing the church from Mr. Smyth, and vesting the property in the hands of trustees. I was surprised, and did not believe it ever could be realised, but eventually it was. I cannot but here remark that my being fixed at St. Clement's, may, from the above incidents, be most clearly traced as a singular feature in the providence of God towards me. Had I not had the conversation with Mr. Townend, I know not how I could have been induced to return to Manchester. I should not have had that conversation with him, had I not received the letter of introduction. Nor should I have had that, unless I had been a few minutes longer, waiting for the coach passing through Coventry.”

A sweet and experimental letter from Dr. Hawker to Mr. Nunn will be found at our 246th page.

POETRY.

A NEW YEAR'S GREETING.

Dear Sir,—May I wish you a happy new year,
 With much good old wine, your spirits to cheer;
 And the true bread of God, which he sent down from heaven,
 Quite pure and unmix'd with the pharisees' leaven?
 Your "Trial of Spirits" I've read with great pleasure;
 Indeed, it to me is a very great treasure.
 If "God's Christ's" not mine, I'm for ever undone;
 For nothing can save me but "God's Christ," the Son.
 I'm lost, I am lost! and for ever must be,
 If Christ, and he *only*, doth not set me free.
 Of all creatures on earth, I'm the worst in myself,
 A poor, dark, benighted, and wandering elf.
 My furnace is seven times hotter than ever;
 The world, sin, and Satan, my soul strive to sever
 From all that has once been my joy and my boast;
 I'm so dark and distracted, my all seems quite lost.
 I've said it,—and once 'twas my glory and boast,—
 That Jesus was mine, and I could not be lost;
 But, now, I seem sinking quite fast into hell,
 And fear that with "God's Christ" I never shall dwell.
 There's nought upon earth—nor indeed is it fit—
 To compare myself to, but the bottomless pit;
 My soul's so distracted, so dark and perplex'd,
 That with sorrow and anguish my mind is quite vex'd.
 Was there ever on earth a case such as mine?
 I'm like one who ne'er tasted the bread and the wine.
 O! if I'm deceived, I'm for ever undone!
 If Christ is not mine, and with him I'm made one.
 Pray, say if you think that for me there is hope.
 What, what must I do? Must I give it all up?
 In bedlam or hell I shall very soon be,
 Unless from this state soon the Lord set me free.
 My life's spent with grief, and with sighing my years;
 My strength fails me quite, and I'm all full of fears;
 While I suffer God's terrors, distracted I am,
 And think that for ever my soul he'll condemn.
 And now, my dear Sir, I must draw to a close.
 Do pray that the Lord may grant me repose.
 May the best wine for you be kept till the last;
 May you drink, and forget all your sorrow that's past.

January 3, 1843.

MARA.

"LIFT THOU UP THE LIGHT OF THY COUNTENANCE UPON US."

Compassionate Lord of my life,
 The hope and the guide of my youth,
 O banish this tumult and strife,
 By sending thy light and thy truth.

How long shall my spirit complain,
 Of doubts, and confusion, and sin,
 Of ignorance, darkness, and pain,
 Of terrors, without and within?

O, shine from the throne of thy grace
 On the work which I hope is begun;

Peterborough.

O, lift up the light of thy face
 And forth in the race I shall run.

O shine, and my murmurs shall cease;
 O bless, and my faith shall ascend;
 Bringing pardon, and comfort, and peace.
 Thus, Lord, all my wanderings attend.

And when other woes shall arise,
 Beclouding the sun of my life,
 Still anoint, and enlighten my eyes,
 Still banish the tumult and strife.

AN EMPTY VESSEL.

THE
GOSPEL STANDARD,
OR,
FEEBLE CHRISTIAN'S SUPPORT.

"Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness; for they shall be filled."—Matt. v. 6.

"Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began."—2 Tim. i. 9.

"The election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded."—Rom. xi. 7.

"If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest.—And they went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch; and he baptized him.—In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost."—Acts viii. 37, 38; Matt. xxviii. 19.

No. 93. SEPTEMBER, 1843. Vol. IX.

A NEW YEAR'S MEDITATION,

BY JAMES OSBOURN, MINISTER OF THE GOSPEL, BALTIMORE.

Dear Sirs and much-esteemed Friends,—I here send you a new year's present, which I have divided into two parts, and which I hope will give no offence to you or yours. By it you will see in what way my mind has been led for some few days past, and what things have mostly engaged my thoughts. If you choose you may call the first part Jehudi, which signifies praising and confessing; and the second part you may call Jahleel, which signifies waiting for or beseeching God. May the Lord bless the reading of it to you; and when we see each other again we will talk the matter over. Grace, love, and peace be with you. Amen.

Mount Zion, Sign of the
Flag of Truce.

A STANDARD BEARER
IN THE ARMY OF RESERVE.—JER. L. 20.

PART I.

"What shall I render to the Lord for all his benefits towards me?" (Ps. cxvi. 12.) My most gracious God has brought me safe to the close of another year; and as I look back on all the way he has led me, and view the innumerable blessings which I have received from his bountiful hand, and at the same time consider my own unworthiness of them, I can but fancy the words of David. to be applicable to myself: "What shall I render to the Lord?" &c. Every year brings me nearer my long, eternal home, and the many favours I receive in a way of providence and grace lay me under fresh obligations to my covenant God. I wish my mind were always suitably impressed with a sense of the loving-kindness of the Lord;

but so far is this from being the case, that I often feel a backwardness in rendering to my kind Benefactor those tributes of praise which his mercy demands. I find ingratitude to be a bitter drug in the cup of mercy, and but for the tender compassion of God, my unthankfulness would soon close his liberal hand. When I reflect on the slow advances I have made in the divine life through the past year, and call to mind the cold returns I have made for the unspeakable kindness shown me by the Lord of glory, I feel abashed and confounded. Backward am I at times to all that is really good, and indifferent to everything that is truly profitable. And when I consider my many imperfections and short comings, and review the swarms of evil thoughts which run through my mind, the many murmurings of heart, the dreadful swellings of pride in my breast, the vain disputings within with the sovereign Lord of all, the base dissatisfaction frequently felt with my lot in life, the powerful workings of my corrupt nature, the strong propensity to evil in me, the amazing aptness to fall in with Satan's infernal projects, the shameful vain glorious desires of my heart in wishing to be great; I say, when I consider these things, and take an impartial view of them, I not only loathe myself in my own eyes, but I stand condemned in my own conscience, and have not a word to answer the Lord in my own behalf. How very justly might the young student at college reflect upon himself, if on the 31st of December he found that he had made no greater progress in literature in the last twelve months than I have in spiritual or eternal things. O the sluggishness and blindness of the human mind, and the impossibility of man's moving towards heaven of his own accord! Not one ray of divine light can there be in the human understanding but what is imparted by the holy and blessed Spirit of God; nor can any other advances be made in holy ground without his special teaching, guiding, drawing, and sanctifying influences. All is a mere blank in the mind of man, with respect to divine things, where the Holy Ghost has not taken up his abode; and, with the Christian also, all is out of tune and out of order; neither can he sing the Lord's song, unless the Spirit of God move upon his heart, and come down upon him in his fulness and graces, like rain upon the mown grass, and as showers which water the earth. There is no shooting forth of our branches, no springing up among the grass, growing as the corn, flourishing as the vine, casting forth our roots as Lebanon, running with delight the way of God's commandments, coming boldly to a throne of grace; no preaching nor hearing to any advantage, without the power of the Holy Ghost. So I find, and so will all find that are taught aright; and to them who are not so taught, these things will be mere paradoxes and hard sayings. (John vi. 60.) The mysteries of the covenant of grace, the secrets of the Most High, the deep things of God, the thoughts of the Lord, the whispers of the Holy Ghost, the path of the just, the ways of wisdom, the joys of the mount, the fulness of the gospel, the pardon of sin, the treasures of mercy, the riches of grace, the fountain of life, the ocean of love, the blessing of peace, the force of truth, the buddings of hope, the acting of faith, fellowship with the

Father and with his Son Jesus Christ, are things known and enjoyed only by a few. So, also, there are but few who know anything about the spiritual warfare, the conflict in the mind between the flesh and the Spirit, the struggling of the old man of sin and the sighs and cries of the new man of grace, the burden of guilt, the plague of the heart, the gloom of the prison-maze, the horror of night, the power of temptation, the fears of apostacy, or the dread of being deceived at last. But all these things are well known by those who are after God's own heart; and, this being the case, a large field of instruction lies open before them. But, as my improvement of the many blessed opportunities with which I have been indulged throughout the year has been but small, and the returns rendered to God for his mercies towards me but very poor; and being, at this time, in a pretty good state of bodily health, and there being but a little space of this year to run, I would fain raise an Ebenezer of praise to the Lord for all his favours throughout the year 1825.

Blessed, for ever blessed, be thy dear name, O Lord, for thy tender care of me, and thy great goodness in sparing me to the present moment; that, instead of numbering me among graceless professors, mere speculators in religion, the ungodly and profane, or with the wicked in death, thou art granting me the pleasure and happiness of frequent visits from thee, with warm and lively addresses at the throne of grace, with a love to divine truth, in the power and sweetness of it, and with a strong desire to know more of Christ, the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, that I may be made more and more conformable unto his death.

Notwithstanding I have been so very wayward in my track, and so rebellious and perverse, yet thou hast been gracious unto me, and hast given me many pledges of thy love-tokens, of thy eternal favour, and of thy special regard, many sweet foretastes of the inheritance of thy saints in light, and many drawings out of soul to thee; as also meltings of affection and softness of heart, with meekness of spirit, and nearness of access to the throne of grace, and hast been every way better to me than I have deserved, or than my fears have many times suggested, for all which I do now desire to express my humble thanks to thee, O my God and King.

From great darkness of mind and oppression of spirit thou hast mercifully delivered me; yea, even when the enemy has been suffered to come in upon me like a flood, thou hast caused a standard to be lifted up against him; so that I have been preserved from being carried away down the stream, and sinking in despair; which would have been the case but for the interposition of divine mercy. And, for such signal kindnesses, I adore thy holy name, and would bless thee for ever and ever.

Thou hast likewise been pleased to stand by me in great straits and difficulties, and hast been a shield for me, and the lifter-up of my head, when darkness has been very threatening and dangers thick on all the ground; and thou hast also afforded me much comfort in reading thy blessed word, and in preaching the same to others; yea, great has been thy goodness towards me; and that my soul knoweth

right well: for all which I desire to render unto thee thanksgiving and praise; which is thy just due, O Lord. Also, whilst thou hast been showing me much of my own ignorance, weakness, and imperfection, thou hast, at the same time, in much mercy, shown me that my wisdom, and strength, and perfection, and all blessings of grace and glory, are treasured up in Christ my covenant Head; and that in him I am all fair, "without spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing." And, for such blessed discoveries, I here cheerfully acknowledge myself an infinite debtor, O Lord.

And whereas, it is highly probable that some who once stood fair, yea, high in a profession of the gospel, have, in the course of this year, apostatized from their profession, and openly turned their back upon the cause which they once espoused, and are now in the way of Cain, and running greedily after the error of Balaam, and I am mercifully preserved from sinking in that common wreck, and am still preserved to adhere to the truth as it is in Jesus, and desiring to be found in the way of peace and righteousness, though, by nature, no better than those apostates, and no more deserving of thy favour, O my God! having never done anything to merit thy love and tender regard; which being the case, I would place my preservation from error and apostacy, and my abiding in thy fear and favour, under the head of sovereign grace, and confess myself to have been kept by thy power alone: for which I now bless and praise thy name with joyful lips. And I would not only bless and praise thee, O Lord, for preserving me from open apostacy, which is become so common in this day of great profession, namely, in swerving from true apostolical doctrine, and laying hold of religion in such a way as will please the carnal and the uncircumcised, in order to become popular, and to be thought well of by graceless professors and the giddy world, (which is a prominent trait in the profession of these times,) but I would say, Thy name, O God, be eternally adored for my escape from a snare so vastly perilous as this, in which so many are now engulfed. Moreover, although my present situation in life, in regard to my being placed at so great a distance from my family, is somewhat trying and unpleasant to nature, yet, as thou, O Lord, art pleased to grant me many other comforts in thy providence, among which is a room to myself, in which I can and do read and study my Bible, and pour out my soul at a throne of grace by day and by night, I feel myself in duty bound to render unto thee most unfeigned thanks, and beseech thee, O God of my mercies, to accept the same, through thy Son Jesus Christ. And also, as thou, O Lord, art pleased, in thy most mysterious providence, to keep me, for so long a time, from my much-loved family, yet, as thou hast been, and still art pleased, in the multitude of thy tender mercies, to be gracious in preserving them from wicked and designing men, and continuing their health, and supplying their temporal necessities, which I cannot do; thyself being a husband and a father to them, I view myself under the strongest obligations to thee, and bound to render grateful praises to thy reverend name.

And although thy prophets, apostles, and dear servants of old,

were made, for the sake of truth and thy honour, to suffer under thirst, and nakedness, and bonds, and imprisonments, and even death itself, yet I, instead of suffering thus, though I have not laboured half so hard in thy cause, nor been half so faithful as they were, nor preached the gospel with half so much power and clearness as they did, yet I have, through the year, met with many friends and great friendship; which leaves me, at the close of the year, deeply in debt both to thee, O my God, and to my friends. Nor have I any other way of clearing myself from this debt than by expressing, without deceit or hypocrisy, my most hearty thanks to my friends, and to thee especially, O my gracious God, which I entreat thee to accept through the merits of Christ, the Son of thy love, and my only refuge and protection. Amen.

(To be continued.)

A TESTIMONY TO THE FREE GRACE OF GOD.

BY JAMES MONTEITH, MINISTER OF BORGUE FROM 1693 TO 1741.

The Lord of heaven and earth having been pleased to give me a being in his church, and enduing me with senses and reason; and also that I should be in the office of the holy ministry, now thirty-six years past in January last; and not knowing how soon I may be removed by death; and considering the great and manifold mercies I have met with in my day, notwithstanding my innumerable sins; I do most humbly and thankfully think it my duty to leave behind a few hints of the Lord's goodness to me, to his glory, and to the edification of my children, and of any to whom these presents shall come.

In June, 1686, having received a token in order to my partaking of the ordinance of the Lord's supper, (having sometimes partaken before then,) I rose near break of day on the Lord's day, and went into a wood a considerable distance from any house, and set about prayer, often and long, until about seven or eight that morning, but found not the frame I desired, but great straitening in my soul, for which, being much cast down by the way to the meeting house, I resolved not to partake that day; but having a token, I would enter the house, though I feared by wanting a frame, I wanted Christ's token. But it pleased the Lord to direct the minister who spoke first, to have Matt. v. 3, "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven," for his text; and what he spoke so suited my case, and the Lord did so bless it to my soul, that my straitening was dissolved before he ended his discourse. The minister of the place was directed to preach the action sermon from Isa. v. 3: "And now, O inhabitants of Jerusalem, and men of Judah, judge, I pray you, betwixt me and my vineyard;" and what he spoke, by the power of God, was so blessed to my soul, that my bonds were loosed to my great satisfaction, and I did partake with refreshment of soul. I went immediately after I rose from the Lord's table, to go alone,

and pour out my soul to the Lord. It was a warm sun-shining day, and as I went into a wood at some distance, the earth seemed to me to move as a ship at sea. Being at the place, I fell down in prayer to God; there I stayed about three hours, but verily I cannot, in words, tell how I was enlarged and overpowered by divine influences, with Rom. v. 1—5: "Therefore, being justified, by faith we have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ; by whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God. And not only so, but we glory in tribulations also; knowing that tribulation worketh patience; and patience experience; and experience hope; and hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost, which is given unto us." O how was my soul filled with life, light, strength, and joy, as I never had any experience of before, embracing the rich, and free, and everlasting promises of the gospel, to me a poor sinner, through Jesus Christ! I was taken up in admiring the free grace of God. O what power, what peace did I then enjoy! For many days the sense of this remained on my heart. Whenever I read or thought on the holy Scriptures they were wonderfully clear to my understanding; then every duty in secret was easy and sweet; then the word, ministers, preachings, and Christians were sweet to me indeed; and, let Atheists think what they will, I found the power of a Deity; let Arians say what they please, I found Christ's divine power above the reach of natural faculties exercised at the utmost. No enthusiastic spirit moved me; all was with the word of God, and according to it, found in my soul, blessed be God for ever and ever. Amen.

In the latter end of April, 1691, having been most part of the winter and spring before under very great distress of soul, by Satan's injections of blasphemous thoughts into my mind, and his other temptations, which occasioned many perplexing thoughts about my salvation, and many prayers to the Lord for help, and not having conveniency by day, I resolved to spend the night in prayer, in order to an outlet from the Lord; and behold, about day break, it pleased the Lord on a sudden to fill the room, where I was alone, with such light, power, and presence, as I never found the like before on earth. It overpowered my soul, clearing all my doubts about my effectual calling and salvation, so that I could say nothing for some time, only stood trembling and weeping with uplifted hands, and only saying that I would not misbelieve as I had done, and that I was effectually called. Then was my soul enlarged, strengthened, and filled with light, life, joy, and peace in believing, far beyond expression. This continued some days, as to some degrees of it, and was in my chamber at Kilmarnock. I was brought low and he helped me. None is a helper like the Lord.

On November 2nd, 1695, I was assaulted by Satan with twelve different temptations, which pressed me sore, as if my soul had been drawn asunder twelve different ways at the same time; and those were backed with the Scriptures, as he tempted our Saviour, Matt. v. 1: "Then was Jesus led up of the Spirit into the wilderness to

be tempted." I could not shun them, they cleaved so to me; nor, in the use of any duty, overcome them; neither durst I tell my wife or any mortal, lest it should discourage them in the good ways of the Lord. Only to the Lord I made my moan day and night, who alone knew all, and could help in any distress; but, like one in quick sands, the more I pressed to be relieved, the more deep I sunk, and was the more ensnared. This was my case near five days. At last the temptation came to a height, and I resolved to go to bed and speak no more in this world to men, nor pray to the Lord any more, so told my wife that I was not well, and would lie alone. I accordingly went to my chamber, fully determined as above. I was scarcely entered the room, alone, when I heard one whispering to me, "Pray once more to the Lord before you go to bed, and speak no more." I listened and heard distinctly; yet my foolish, unbelieving heart did reply, it was in vain if I should, having so often prayed for help without success, as I desired; yet the issue was, I would pray once, be as it will. And O the wonderful goodness of the Lord! no sooner was I on my knees, than an inexpressible power came on my soul with light, life, and sweetness, with pertinent scriptures answering all the temptations one after another, so that they were all effectually removed, as if they had never been in my heart, and instead of them, many scriptures came with power on my soul, whereby it was wonderfully refreshed, enlarged, eased, strengthened, and comforted, and also my very body was strangely at ease, as one made whole by the Lord, before whom I was humble, joyful, and thankful, as one who was dead and made alive, bound in fetters and loosed. Let none who seek the Lord give way to despair, whatever be their distress; for the Lord can soon help, and is a present help in time of need; and when his people are lowest, his help is nearest: "When the poor and needy seek water, and there is none, and their tongue faileth for thirst, I the Lord will hear them, I the God of Israel will not forsake them." (Isa. xli. 17.) O what is man before a temptation, and how sympathizing and condescending is the Lord to his own in distress! There is none like him. O fear the Lord! O bless the Lord! O trust in the Lord, all ye his saints!

June 28th, 1696, having preached at Girthon the day before the administration of the Lord's supper, being Saturday, after my return home, and going alone, it pleased the Lord graciously to discover himself and his will in his gospel covenant, and his divine love for me, and powerfully to draw out my soul toward him into a most melting frame, and to open my heart, not only to embrace the Lord Jesus Christ as revealed in the gospel, but also to acknowledge God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost to be my God and everlasting portion in time and eternity, and to enable me to dedicate and devote myself, soul and body, to him and his service for ever, and that with as much soul enlargement and spiritual sense of his goodness, mercy, grace, and love to me as I could desire on earth; then I had no hesitation about an interest in God in Christ and his special love to me, of his being my God and Father in Christ, of my being pardoned, and of my enjoying real gracious fellowship with him in

gospel duties and ordinances. O what soul strength had I then, what comforts, what sweet repose of soul in a nearness to a gracious God in Christ, far exceeding, far above all expression. This frame lasted through that night, next Lord's day, and most part of Monday; but alas! it went off that evening, for the most part. The Lord is sovereign to give or withdraw his influences as he pleaseth; but surely it is good to draw near to God in his ordinances, according to his word. All who speak or think against the reality and soul-satisfaction real believers enjoy in fellowship with God, as delusions of, crazy brains, will surely in the end find they have been speaking against his gracious operations, which they were wholly ignorant of in experience, and will find in the end their going about duties, exercising only their natural faculties, to be unacceptable unto God and unprofitable to their souls; and that their contenting themselves with serving God in an outward, formal way, and slighting the internal, spiritual part, hath been the spring of their eternal ruin.

July 8th, 1706, being the Monday after the celebration of the Lord's supper in Borg, Ebenezer, then my only son, took ill. When I rose I saw that he was dying. I went into a chamber, leaving his mother and others with him. I cannot express how it pleased a gracious Lord to show himself to my soul there, with light, life, strength, and consolation, clearing up to my soul that he was my God in Christ, and the God of my seed for ever, with such power, that I could not desire more on earth, and heaven came down, as it were, to my soul, with such light, power, and sense, that I had not room to receive more, though my soul was indeed inexpressibly enlarged at that time. I thought that if I had a son every day in my life afterwards to die, I could most easily part with them, and say most cheerfully, "Lord, take them to thee, and a thousand blessings to thee for doing it." I stayed a considerable time alone; I cannot tell how long it was, but when I came again to my son, and saw that he was near his end, I desired him to look to Jesus Christ as the only Saviour. He observed me, though weak, and smiled, and in a moment after he departed this life. In the meantime my soul was so serene, and filled with joy and peace, that I had ado to keep myself from leaping in the room, and never had one moment of sorrow for his death, though he was gone in the sixth year of his age, and showed extraordinary capacity and fondness toward all that was good, and an abhorrence of all evil, and was an only son, five being dead before. This frame lasted some days. O the wonderful goodness of God to me a poor sinner! Religion is a real thing. How establishing a thing is grace, and how comfortable is divine presence when the Lord pleaseth to give it! "Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits." Because the Lord has been my help, rejoice, O my soul, in the shadow of his wings. I went, as soon as he was laid by as a corpse, unto the church-yard, and heard the Monday sermons with singular satisfaction, and preached a thanksgiving sermon next day, it being appointed for that in this church and land. * * *

I must own, when the news of the Pretender's coming to sea was

made known, that after several hours and several days were spent, I was assured in prayer that he would not succeed in his undertaking, from scriptures powerfully impressed on my soul, which made me weep for joy when the news came of his defeat. As things grew dark until August, 1714, I cannot hide it, that my soul was established in prayer by the holy Scriptures that the Pretender's party would be disappointed; and even on the 15th, I had no fears about the Lord's appearing and breaking that party as they were; and accordingly I preached and wrote to some friends who doubted about it. This I ascribe to the glory of free grace alone encouraging earnest addresses to him in a dark hour, being far in my soul from enthusiastic dreams. I can attest that there is a real intercourse with God in Christ in these ways of duty on earth, which those who are strangers do not know; yet they are sometimes so sensibly enjoyed by Christians, that they would not be without them for all the earth.

[The book from which the above extracts are taken came in a singular manner into our hand; and though there is much in it which savours of the legal divinity of that day, yet we found a reality and power in many parts which induced us to give a few extracts from it in our pages. It has lain in manuscript for many years, and has only been comparatively recently published.—

Eds.]

REALITIES.

Dear Brother,—I here send you a few lines, according to promise, and am happy to say that I am at present out of that place where hope never cometh, which is a great mercy. I have been very unwell in body since I last saw you, but ten times worse in mind. My poor mind is at times so harassed, that I scarcely know what I am about. I told you how well I heard Mr. K—, at Croydon, and what comfort I got under him. I lost all my sins, and all my debts, and all my doubts, and all my fears; so that I was, as it were, out of myself and quite another man altogether, in my feelings. This sweet frame of mind lasted for a day or two afterwards, and I could say with the psalmist, "How sweet are thy words to my taste! yea, sweeter than honey to my mouth." But alas! my friend, it all vanished away; my sins returned, and my fears came fresh upon me with such a weight that it broke me down to the earth; again my harp was hung upon the willows: "My harp is turned into mourning, and my organ into the voice of them that weep. I go mourning without the sun, because of my sin." I am not fit to join with the people of God, and the world hates me. I am a companion to owls, and a brother to dragons, in my feelings. I often think that I am the worst and the vilest of men that ever lived on the face of the earth. I seem to stand condemned to die, and that to all eternity. But still I sometimes hope that I am not yet cast for death, although I am condemned. I do assure you that there is no way of escape for me; for the law is holy, just, and true, and I know it; and I know that I have broken that law, and cannot repair it; so that there is no hope for me in that way. There must be one to stand in the gap, or else I cannot be saved. This I know feel-

ingly, and I am as sure of it as I am of my existence. But you will say, "There is Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever; he, and he alone, is the sinner's salvation; there is no other way, as there is no other name given under heaven whereby we can be saved. You should look to him, and trust in him, and he will save you." Yes; I know all that very well. There is a great deal said about this great and blessed Jesus in our day; he is almost in everybody's mouth; he is very much talked about, but very little, I fear, known and felt in the heart savingly and experimentally. I wish I could look to him and trust him, and love and praise his blessed name; but how can I look in the dark? if I do, I cannot see him. Poor Job said, "If I go backward I cannot see him; if I go forward he is not there." Then he says, "O that I knew where I might find him!" The poor man was in the dark. You see he was to poor Job what he is to you and me, the chiefest among ten thousand, and the altogether lovely. But we must see him, and we must feel his power too, and we must know him for ourselves, and our eyes must see him, I mean the eye of faith. Ah, my friend, I have proved the truth of the words of the poet, where he says,

"We sin forsake, to sin return—
Are hot, are cold—now freeze, now burn."

O what a changing scene is this world! How many are our trials whilst passing through this vale of tears! None but those who feel these trials know anything about them. There is that mighty enemy the devil always trying to trip up our heels, and our weakness leans to his temptations; and there is our own deceitful and desperately wicked heart, full of all manner of evil, and a complete sink of sin, which is continually boiling up, like a corrupt fountain. I feel the truth of those words: "A man's enemies are those of his own household," so a man's foes are his nearest kin. I find it so in two senses of the word, and that bitterly too. I know it by painful experience, which is the only religion worth contending for. That religion is not worth a straw which is not felt in the heart.

I have received a small note from brother W. which informed me that you were quite well, but not at home, by which I understand that you are not happy, not just where you would like to be. But if you belong to a blessed Jesus, you are just where he would have you to be, and that is a great blessing. O my friend, what a blessed God we have to do with! He is a God that loveth at all times, a wonder-working God. He has said, "I will never leave thee nor forsake thee;" and what he has said he will never alter; the word is gone out of his mouth, and it will never return to him void, but it shall accomplish the thing whereunto he sent it. He has also said, "He that cometh unto me I will in nowise cast out;" and I know and am sure that if ever I am led unto him he will never cast me out, for the word has gone out of his blessed mouth; he has said, "No man can come unto me except the Father who hath sent me draw him." The love of the Father being put into the heart of the sinner, let him be the greatest sinner that ever lived, that love is so great, so rich, and so free, that it will draw the

poor sinner to Jesus, for until he finds Jesus to be his friend he will find no resting place: "In the world ye shall have tribulation, but in me ye shall have peace. It is vain for us to think of peace in this world, for I know that we shall not have it. God is not a poor mortal man, saying one thing and meaning another: "He spake, and it was done; he commanded, and it stood fast." He has said, "These are they that came out of great tribulation;" consequently, they must have been in great tribulation before they could come out of it. "Have I spoken," says the Lord, "and shall I not bring it to pass?" To be sure he will. My friend, we read, you know, in the word, that this is not our rest, it is polluted; but how do we know that it is polluted? Why, when we see ourselves as the word describes us to be, poor polluted creatures from head to foot, having no soundness in us; when we can say feelingly with the apostle, "I know that in me, that is, in my flesh, dwelleth no good thing; for to will is present with me, but how to perform that which is good I find not; for that which I would do I do not, but that which I would not do that I do. I find a law in my members warring against the law of my mind." You see his mind was to do good, but he found so much pollution within that he could not do the things that he would; and so do I, for if I could live as I list, I would be blessing and praising God all day long; I would shout aloud for joy; I would bless his dear name for his loving-kindness and tender mercy to me. But you see we have such a body of sin and death to carry about with us, which is such a burden, that it makes us go groaning, and mourning, and hanging down our heads. But the apostle comes to this conclusion at last: "So then, I with the mind serve the law of God, but with the flesh the law of sin." I am convinced that every sinner must be brought down and humbled very much, and made to see and feel his weakness, helplessness, and inability to do anything really good, in and of himself, before he can from his heart and soul adopt the language of the apostle; yet I believe thousands utter it with their lips who never felt it in their hearts. I am persuaded that God will make all his people know him, and will cause them to fall at his feet, and, from the very feelings of their heart, cry out, "God be merciful to me a sinner." Every child of God will learn from experience that he is a sinner, and will feel himself to be the vilest of the vile; for the Lord has said, "They shall all know me, from the least to the greatest;" and what he has said shall surely come to pass: "Once have I spoken, and I will not lie unto David."

My friend, we must be weaned from every breast of consolation that this world can give, before we shall rightly fly into the arms of Jesus. I have learned by painful experience, during the last fifteen years that I have been travelling this chequered path, what it is to grapple with flesh and blood. O what hard work it is for our old nature to part with all its comforts, and to find in every sweet a snare! and what hard work it is to go grovelling along in the dark for years, when everything seems to be against us, both spiritual and temporal! This has been my experience, and you, my dear brother, are not altogether unacquainted with it. It is indeed hard to feel the hidings

of God's face, to have no comfort at home or abroad, night or day; to have a body of sin to carry about with us, and a great burden of debts on our backs, being afraid to meet any one on the road, lest he should be a creditor; to go to a throne of grace and find no access, thinking that we have not a friend in the world, and fearing that God has cast us off for ever, and that he will be favourable no more. Whilst in this state, I have gone and thrown myself down where no eye could see me but the eye of God, and tried to pour out my complaint before him, but have returned again with my burden heavier than before. Poor David knew something of this when he said, "My prayer returned to my own bosom." And what is worse than all, is, that our hearts are as full of rebellion as they can hold against a good and gracious God. But, blessed be his name, he has said, "I will see you again, and your joy shall be full, and that joy no man taketh from you." O what a blessed sight, when we see him look at us again! What a blessed look he gave poor Peter, and unbelieving Thomas; it made him cry out, "My Lord and my God." When he shows us his face through the lattice, one glimpse of his love convinces us that he is not gone for ever. O blessed be his dear name, he comes leaping and skipping over the mountains of our sins! he takes away all our doubts and all our fears, all our debts and all our troubles, and makes us new creatures in Christ. Blessed be the name of our dear Lord for his loving-kindness and tender mercy to us poor sinful creatures. O that his praise may sound from pole to pole! "O that men would praise the Lord for his goodness and for his wonderful works to the children of men!"

Wishing you every covenant blessing, with much of the Lord's gracious presence, I am, yours in gospel bonds,

April 15, 1843.

A POOR TRIED PILGRIM.

THE SENTIMENTS OF THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND,

AS PREFIXED TO THE NEW TESTAMENT OF QUEEN ELIZABETH'S BIBLE, 1584, IN CERTAIN QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS, TOUCHING THE DOCTRINE OF PREDESTINATION, THE USE OF GOD'S WORD, AND SACRAMENTS.

QUESTION. Why do men so much vary in matters of religion?

ANSWER. Because all have not the like measure of knowledge, neither do all believe the gospel of Christ.

Q. What is the reason thereof?

A. Because they only believe the gospel and doctrine of Christ, which are ordained unto eternal life.

Q. Are not all ordained unto eternal life?

A. Some are vessels of wrath ordained unto destruction, as others are vessels of mercy prepared to glory.

Q. How standeth it with God's justice that some are appointed unto condemnation?

A. Very well; because all men have in themselves sin, which deserveth no less, and therefore the mercy of God is wonderful, in that he vouchsafeth to save some of that sinful race, and to bring them to the knowledge of the truth.

Q. If God's ordinance and determination must of necessity take effect, then what need any man to care, for he that liveth well must needs be damned if he be thereunto ordained, and he that liveth ill must needs be saved if he be thereunto appointed?

A. Not so; for it is not possible that either the elect should always be without care to do well, or that the reprobate should have any will thereunto, for to have either good will or good work, is a testimony of the Spirit of God, which is given unto the elect only, whereby faith is so wrought in them, that being grafted in Christ, they grow in holiness to that glory whereunto they are appointed. Neither are they so vain as once to think that they may do as they list themselves, because they are predestinate unto salvation; but rather they endeavour to walk in such good works as God in Christ Jesus hath ordained them unto, and prepared for them to be occupied in, to their own comfort, stay, and assurance, and to his glory.

Q. But how shall I know myself to be one of those whom God hath ordained unto life eternal?

A. By the motions of spiritual life, which belongeth only to the children of God, by the which that life is perceived even as the life of this body is discerned by the sense and motions thereof.

Q. What mean you by the motions of spiritual life?

A. I mean remorse of conscience joined with the loathing of sin and love of righteousness; the hand of faith reaching unto life eternal in Christ, the conscience comforted in distress, and raised up to confidence in God by the work of his Spirit, a thankful remembrance of God's benefits received, and the using of all adversities as occasion of amendment sent from God.

Q. Cannot such perish as at some time or other feel these motions within themselves?

A. It is not possible that they should; for as God's purpose is not changeable, so he repenteth not of the gifts and graces of his adoption, neither doth he cast off those whom he hath once received.

Q. Why then should we pray by the example of David that he cast us not from his face, and that he take not his Holy Spirit from us?

A. In so praying we make protestation of the weakness of flesh, which moveth us to doubt; yet should not we have courage to ask, if we were not assured that God would give according to his purpose and promise, that which we require.

Q. Do the children of God feel the motions aforesaid always alike?

A. No, truly; for God, sometimes to prove his, seemeth to leave them in such sort, that the flesh over-matcheth the spirit, whereof ariseth trouble of conscience for the time, yet the spirit of adoption is never taken from them that have once received it, else might they perish. But, as in many diseases of the body, the powers of bodily life are letted; so in some assaults these motions of spiritual life are not perceived, because they lie hidden in our manifold infirmities as the fire covered with ashes. Yet, as after sickness cometh health, and after clouds the sun shineth clear, so the powers of spiritual life will more or less be felt and perceived in the children of God.

Q. What if I never feel these motions in my soul, shall I despair, and think myself a cast-away ?

A. God forbid ; for God calleth us at what time he seeth good, and the instruments whereby he usually calleth have not the like effect at all times, yet it is not good to neglect the means whereby God hath determined to work the salvation of his. For as wax is not melted without heat, nor clay hardened but by means thereof, so God useth means both to draw those unto himself whom he hath appointed unto salvation, and also to betray the wickedness of them whom he justly condemneth.

Q. By what means useth God to draw men to himself that they may be saved ?

A. By the preaching of his word and the ministering of his sacraments thereunto annexed.

Q. What mean you by the word of God ?

A. I mean the doctrine of the prophets and apostles, which they received of the Spirit of God, and have left written in that book which we commonly call the Old and New Testament.

Q. How may I be assured that it is the word of God which that book containeth ?

A. By the majesty of God appearing in that plain and simple doctrine ; by the pureness, uprightness, and holiness thereof ; by the certainty of every thing therein affirmed ; by the success of all things according to it ; by perpetual consent which is to be seen in every part thereof ; by the excellency of the matter uttered ; but especially by the testimony of God's Spirit, whereby it was written, who moveth the hearts of those in whom it resteth to consent unto the word and reverently to embrace it.

Q. How doth this word of God serve to draw men unto him ?

A. When it is so preached and heard, that men may understand and learn what God teacheth, accept and receive thankfully that which is thereby given, promised, and assured, and be moved with desire and diligence to do that which it commandeth.

Q. Do the sacraments also serve to this end ?

A. Yes, verily, that by sight, taste, and feeling, as well as by hearing, we might be instructed, assured, and brought to obedience.

Q. How doth our baptism serve hereunto ?

A. It teacheth us to put on Christ, that with his righteousness our sinfulness may be hidden ; it assureth us that we are so grafted into Christ that all our sins by him are washed away ; it chargeth us to die to sin, to continue in the profession of Christ, and to love each other.

Q. Hath the Lord's Supper also this use ?

A. Yea, doubtless ; for it teacheth that the body and blood of Christ crucified is the only food of the new born children of God ; it assureth that Christ is wholly theirs to give and to continue life spiritual and heavenly to body and soul, to nourish, strengthen, refresh, and to make cheerful the hearts of the elect ; it requireth thankful remembrance of the death of Christ, unity among them that do profess him, with a free confession of his truth.

Q. Why is not this use of the sacraments commonly known?

A. Because they are abused for form, for fashion, for custom, and company, without regard unto the word, whereunto they are so annexed, that they ought not upon any necessity by any person be severed from it, which teacheth the right use of every thing.

Q. I perceive that nothing is more necessary than the word of God; therefore, I pray you, show me how I may attain to some knowledge and profit thereby.

A. By diligent hearing of such as preach it; by continual and orderly exercise of reading and praying.

Q. What orderly exercise think you most convenient to be used herein?

A. That as every day, twice at least, we most commonly receive food to the nourishment of this corporal life, so no day be let pass without some reading, in such sort that occasion thereby may be taken to speak again unto God by prayer as he in his word speaketh unto us, so that at least two chapters would be orderly and advisedly read every day, all other business, impediments, and lets set apart.

Q. This seemeth very easy to be done; what think you else requisite?

A. That some special places of scripture be so committed to memory that the mind may ever be furnished with some good matter against all temptations. To which end I note these scriptures unto you; whereunto you may join other at your own choice: Ps. cxxxix. 37, 50; Essay liii.; John xvii.; Rom. viii.; 1 Tim. iv.

Q. But the scriptures are hard, and not easy to understand.

A. Discourage not yourself herewith, for God maketh them easy to such as in humility seek him; and that hardness that you find serveth to move you to the more diligence, and to make inquiry of such as have knowledge when any doubt ariseth. That which you perceive not at one time God will reveal at another, so that you shall have your growing in grace, knowledge, and godliness, to God's glory and your own comfort in Christ, whose name for ever be praised. Amen.

"I WAS BROUGHT LOW; AND HE HELPED ME."

My dear Friend and Brother,—Grace and peace be with you, from Jesus, the Prince of Peace.

Twelve months of our sinful and sorrowful life have passed away since I saw you last, which was a solemn and heavy time with me. Surely, I knew a little of what Naomi felt when she said, "Call me *Mara*;" for bitterness indeed was mingled in my cup, and the Almighty testified against me. Perplexity and embarrassment in all my earthly affairs, heavy losses, friends forsaking me, a large family with numerous wants, and an unhealthy tabernacle, with death in possession of a dear child before my eyes, were solemn things with me, speaking, "Mystery, mystery," and no Paul to say, "Behold, I show you it;" no, there was no interpreter. It was a time of trouble, a time of great searchings of heart, a time of sorrow, but not of peace;

and, what was worse than all, there was no time of really and heartily reposing in God as I wanted, and no saying with Job, "Blessed be his name;" no, no; with me it was not so. I could feel the wounding, but not the healing hand; I was more inclined to indulge my sorrows and grief than to arise and worship. Like Aaron, I said, "Such and such things have befallen me; and if I open my mouth, shall I be heard? and if I offer a sacrifice, should it be accepted?" (Lev. x. 19.) A son honoureth his father; and this I knew, that to offer the lame and sick was evil; therefore, I sat alone, because of the Lord's hand; for refuge in the creature utterly failed me; nor could I meet with a brother, as Paul did, to thank God and take courage; for all seemed at rest but myself; which did but aggravate my misery, and made me inwardly groan and cry, "I am more brutish than any man."

Then have I tried again to make the Lord my refuge, to carry my sorrows unto him, and leave them in his hand; and have thought, "Surely, if there is pity with the Lord, if there is compassion, if there are bowels of mercy with the Lord, he will be moved towards me, and suffer me to come before him, ~~and~~ unto his mercy-seat." But, if he hideth his face, who can behold him? And this have I found to be true, that "no man can come unto Christ except the Father draw him;" O! no. Read the blessed promises, I did; pray with words, I oftentimes did; but come, as Mary came, "near unto him," I could not; for I lacked the enjoyment of that dissolving, constraining, and drawing love of God the Father that draweth the soul, as it drew John, into the very bosom of Jesus, that turneth the shadow of death into the morning, and without which I am confident in saying (and that not in opinion only, but by heart-felt experience) that no soul, whether regenerate or unregenerate, can, with an appropriating faith, come, like John, unto the blessed Jesus, and behold what he saw, and say with him, "My Lord and my God." This have I found to be the work of an omnipotent Jehovah, whom neither merit (if such a thing can be found) nor misery can move, but who resteth in his love. Where, then, O! where, indeed, can mortal, sinful, apostate man be found that *maketh* (mark that) the eternal Jehovah his refuge? It is true that the Lord is a refuge; yet my soul hath it still in remembrance that I could not feel him to be my refuge; but, like a worm thrust out of his earthy abode into the burning light of a midday sun, rolls back again into the first cavern of its mother earth, so have I crawled into the first hole of my own misery, and have inwardly requested for myself that the Lord would suffer me to dwell there alone, and give me strength sufficient to endure it, and patience to wait until his own arm brought salvation; for I was unfit for any company. If I opened my mouth to a friend, it seemed to add to my grief, as they appeared to be strangers, in feeling, to my real case; nor did it in any way relieve me; for, after this, a deathly feeling has thrilled through my heart, and my soul has trembled in itself, while the adversary has roared within me, "You see that there is no pity for you; they only mock you. Where is your vain confidence now?" and my soul has groaned

within me, "*Where, indeed? for here my comeliness has turned into corruption.*" What Isaiah spoke, I now felt realized, that all flesh is grass, and the goodness thereof as the flower of the field, that fadeth away when the Spirit of the Lord bloweth upon it.

But surely my friend will say, "The word of our God abideth for ever." O, yes; and so I have found it. His convicting, convincing, and condemning word did abide with me; his correcting, rebuking, and reproving word, I found to stand fast; but, for his restoring and life-giving word, there were great searchings of heart. My high heaps and way-marks I have looked for until my eyes have failed; and ancient landmarks seem to have been removed, until necessity has brought me to the place where the Lord began with me, once more to feel myself a little helpless child,—to the place where Israel, who was a prince with God, did look, when on his death bed, saying, "God Almighty appeared unto me at Luz, in the land of Canaan, and blessed me." O sacred place! O solemn and never-to-be-forgotten spot! like Bethany, where Jesus lifted up his hands and blessed his disciples; "and it came to pass that *while* he blessed them he was parted from them." Heaven and earth may pass away, but this most sacred place cannot remove. It yet continues, and must continue; for the blessing is begun; nor can it cease until the burnt offering be ended, until *He*, the blessed Jesus, our great High Priest, deliver up the kingdom unto God, his Father, and our Father in *him*, that God may be all in all. Amen.

For a little space have I *here* been suffered, now and then, (for it was not often,) to rest my weary soul; and, to me, this was like Elijah's food; for, in the strength of this meat, I had to wander perhaps many days in a waste and howling wilderness. Many weeks, and some months, rolled over me, with now and then a little help for me; but, generally, my days were consumed away in sorrow and sighing, and my life spent in grief.

O what tender, forbearing, long-suffering mercy did compass me about in all my ways! and I knew it not. What but this kept me from innumerable evils that my heart conceived and strove to bring forth? What shielded my soul from a consuming fire burning within me, which must have destroyed and devoured me at once, but long-suffering mercy, omnipotent mercy, everlasting mercy? What held me up that I fell not into manifold temptations, known only to God, (nor can I unfold them,) but that secret, invisible, and almighty arm of Infinite Mercy?

"O to mercy what a debtor!"

Join with me in giving thanks unto him; "for he is good; for his mercy endureth for ever." Well may it be said, "Let the redeemed of the Lord say so;" for who like Israel can sing this song: "The Lord hath triumphed gloriously; the horse and his rider hath he thrown into the sea?" Who shall speak as they that are delivered from the noise of archers? These only can rehearse the righteous acts of the Lord, and can feelingly say that they remember the way which the Lord hath led them in the wilderness, how he humbled them, how he suffered them to hunger, how he fed them with manna

that they knew not, and how he made them know that man doth not live by bread only, but that he lives by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of the Lord? O, yes! doubtless that word of the Lord to Abram, "Know of a surety that thy seed shall be a stranger in a land that is not thine, and shall serve them; and they shall afflict them four hundred years," (Gen. xv. 13;) was a truth that Israel received from Abram, and held sacred.

But, to find the *life* of this word, how Israel *lived* by it, we must find Israel in Egypt, sighing and crying by reason of bondage and oppression. (Exod. ii. 23.) Here is truth, indeed, written with a pen of iron, not on parchment rollers, but on flesh, by tables deeply engraved in an anguished heart, carrying its own evidence, and shutting all mouths; while the seed sown by Abram now springs up in Israel; and the new-born blade of Israel's life thus appears: "And God heard their groaning, and God remembered his covenant with Abraham, with Isaac, and with Jacob; and God looked upon the children of Israel, and God had respect unto them;" (Exod. ii. 24, 25;) "And the Lord said, I have surely seen the affliction of my people which are in Egypt, and have heard their cry by reason of their taskmasters; for I know their sorrows; and I am come down to deliver them." (Exod. iii. 7, 8.) It is thus, and only thus, that man *lives* by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God; and, were it not for a divine and unerring Providence secretly but irresistibly working the fulfilment of a divine word in us, how little should we know of its most sacred and solemn contents! indeed, we know nothing of it really to our profit, as a spiritual word, but as the Holy Spirit makes it ours by a feeling vitality. Here is certainty, and here is confidence, whether in rebuke or in comfort. The voice saith, "Cry;" and if these hold their peace, where shall a cry be heard? It is this that has moved me to put a few of my exercises into words, and sent them forth in this form unto one with whom I can use freedom and feel a union in the best of bonds.

Oftimes have I longed to speak with you, in hopes of finding a little ease; but this could not be. A fatherly hand hath personally separated us for a small space; but He that gathereth the lambs with his arm will shortly put them together, and say, "I will feed the flock of slaughter; and they shall go no more out;" and, to bind up the testimony, hear what he says: "Their King shall pass before them, and the Lord on the head of them." (Micah ii. 13.) O may the same Lord give us both submission to his holy will and patience to endure to the end, that when we are tried we may come forth as gold; for he hath said, "I will never leave thee nor forsake thee." O, no! blessed be his name, forsaken we may be termed, but he hath named us *Hephzibah* (the Lord delighteth in thee); and it is my own peculiar and personal mercy to bear a feeble testimony to this most blessed truth.

I must now tell you a little more of the Lord's merciful dealings with me, how he has taken me and drawn me out of many waters. For about six months, I walked, or rather sat, in the path which I have tried to show you something of, groaning beneath the pressure

of a heavy burden, accompanied with thick darkness on every side, and feeling enough of my sin to shut me out from the portion of God's children; I mean that heart-breaking, sin-pardoning, soul-dissolving, Abba-crying, merciful presence of the eternal God, as my Father in the Lord Jesus Christ. During this time, I felt but little inclination for reading; yet was uneasy if I did not read. The Lamentations of Jeremiah, the afflictions of Job, and the cryings of David in the Psalms, were my frequent musings; for I could seldom get through a chapter, or a psalm, without many inward checks, frequent pausings, and much questioning. I then hailed the beginning of the month; for the *Gospel Standard* was to me a messenger and companion. I found it more welcome than any other human production; not that by it I could put entirely off my sackcloth, or change my ashes for beauty; yet I have generally found, in one piece or other of this book, more of my own case and state laid open before me, by those men of God who contribute to its pages, than I could read or hear anywhere else, or even, at certain times, speak myself. This was a kind of relief, which I then valued; and I often felt a melting of soul to them, though personally unknown. While reading that book, I have sometimes found a secret rending of my rocky heart, a little breaking and giving way, a rumbling felt beneath, as a voice that speaketh out of the ground; (Isa. xxix. 4;) and, for a moment, I have marvelled to hear these strangers speak, in my own language, the wonderful works of God. Yea, I have frequently found the *Gospel Standard* a well of springing water, whose overflowings, as a gentle stream, have softly and silently carried me down to Bethesda's pool, waiting for the moving of the waters; and I generally lay down that book with this impression: "I will arise and go to my Father, and say, Father, I have sinned before thee, and am no more worthy to be called thy son; make me as one of thy hired servants." It has truly been to me a light shining in a dark place, though not the Day-Star itself.

I must now try to show you how that glorious Day-Star arose. It was on a Lord's Day morning. I was much cast down with many painful thoughts, and, from my soul, bemoaned my case, believing that there was no man like me. I envied the happy state of the righteous, who would one day be satisfied with good things, whilst I must pine away in my wretchedness. I wondered what I could read; for although it was generally a burden to me, yet I could not refrain; and, looking over some books, I saw "The Heir of Heaven walking in Darkness," at which I instantly felt an inclination to look. I took it up for that purpose, when a sudden deathly feeling of a voice pierced through me, saying, "It is of no use; for you have read it through;" and the words "no use, no use," seemed written on all the books which I had. My feelings I cannot put in words; but you may find something like them in Isaiah xxxviii. 10, and succeeding verses. "Walking in darkness, walking in darkness," followed me; nor could I feel satisfied without looking again at this heir of the kingdom and his dark path. I took the book, and retired alone; I read, and believed every word that I read of it, and could give a

heartily Amen to the solemn truths which were there spoken of; but I could not find in my heart to believe that *I myself* was this happy heir. I read to the 21st page, where the third mark of this character is given; and, about the middle of the page, I found these words: "Is it possible that one who fears God, and obeys the voice of his servant, should be in this condition?" which, as an arrow, suddenly, but certainly, sank deep into my rocky heart; and there was such a rending, that my soul vehemently cried, "Turn thine hand, and carry me out; for I am wounded." I paused and trembled, and could read no farther, nor keep my mouth from audibly saying, "It is possible, it is possible, it is possible;" and, although I had read this book through twice before, how the author did farther trace this heavenly heir seemed as unknown to me as though I had seen it written in a language with which I was unacquainted. For the moment I was troubled, lest the prophet would walk no farther with me; but I felt power to weep, and, with a little help, to make supplication unto God, that he would show me his way, and lead me in his paths. I was silently drawn to look again at this strange sight, (a child of light immersed in darkness,) and pursued him to the middle of the next page, where the author proclaims, "It is not the darkness, then, of the unregenerate that is here meant," and the stone was immediately taken away from the place where the dead was laid, and there was light to see that this darkness was peculiar to God's elect. I was then quietly and softly led on to these words: "But, after beauty had covered the earth, under the creating hand of Jehovah, it was there still, though unseen and covered with darkness," which were filled with such a sense of the everlasting and unchanging love of God the Father, as my Father, that left me no time to say, "Make me as one of thy hired servants;" and all that I could say was, "It is here still, it is here still, it is here still." O blessed, holy, merciful, tender Father, thy great and dear love is here still!

Surely now was a little of that power felt which the blessed Jesus put forth when he cried, "Lazarus, come forth!" and he that was dead came forth. Now did the Day-Star indeed arise in my heart; and I knew that no prophecy of the Scriptures was of private interpretation; for all was freely made my own; and a proclamation was made, "Every man to his own city." Now my oppressors were broken to pieces; and I am sure that it grieved the adversary of my poor soul, and cut him to the heart, to see such an honourable acquittal, to see Him who is the Resurrection and the Life come down himself to the wretched, dark abode of a rebellious worm, and, with his own almighty arm, throw open the prison doors, and proclaim with his own voice, "I will ransom them from the power of the grave; I will redeem them from death. O, death! I will be thy plague; O, grave! I will be thy destruction." Surely, never was death so plagued, nor the grave so shaken, as in seeing the uttermost farthing of our ransom laid down, in death's own coin, by the bleeding hands of "God with us." Now was the song of Hannah, in 1 Samuel ii., peculiarly my own, especially the 8th verse, where he raised my poor soul out of the dust, and set me among the princes of his people;

for all things were made common, and Thomas was with his disciples, and did eat this bread with gladness, unto the 30th page, where it is written, "Thus have I laid open, as far as God has enabled me, the experience of a living soul." I was enabled to subscribe with my hand unto the Lord, and say, "It is mine, it is mine;" for, like the Shunamite, (2 Kings viii. 6,) who had restored "unto her all that was hers, and all the fruits of the field since the day that she left the land, even until now," so was I replenished, and lacked no good thing; and the Lord turned my captivity, and gave me, to use as my own, the whole of the sweet contents of Jer. xxxi. 15, 16, 17, which has wonderfully made up to me the loss of my dear children; and Jacob's words were often with me, "I am not worthy of the least of all the mercies, and of all the truth, which thou hast showed unto thy servant; for with my staff I passed over this Jordan, and now I am become two bands."

O what a vast difference to find tribulation in the Bible, and to feel tribulation in the heart; to read the love of God in letters, and to feel the love of God to be my everlasting life. I do not think that we can in any way prove this so much as by continuing with Jesus in his temptations. Here we see the works of the Lord and his wonders in the deep; how he commandeth and raiseth the stormy wind, and how he maketh the storm a calm.

Since that time, I have been much indulged with manifold mercies, and have, in a certain measure, rested in the Lord from my sorrow and toil, who hath crowned me with lovingkindness and tender mercies, and who hath satisfied my mouth with good things; yea, no good thing has he withheld that I have found in my heart to ask him for.

Here I could much enlarge, and show my friend, by the assistance of God, how he hath remembered me in my low estate, how he hath himself made a way for his ransomed people to pass over, and how he hath made up to me the loss of all things; but I must, at present, forbear, seeing that I have written so long an epistle. The Lord himself bless thee, my dear friend, and keep thee, and be gracious unto thee, and give thee peace. Amen.

I remain, yours in Jesus,

J. N.

ONLY GONE BEFORE.

My dear Friends in the glorious Head of the church,—Your kind letter came to hand, with the tidings of the death of our dear brother Martin. Well, all his storms are over, and ours cannot last long, and each one leaves the number less. Our blessed Lord will not let us have one trouble too many, no, nor let them be too boisterous, or last too long; and he will see to it that all shall work together for good. Our dear covenant God cannot make any mistakes, nor suffer anything to do his blood-bought family any real harm. From self and self-dependance he *will* deliver us, although flesh and blood will often sigh and groan, yea, and kick and rebel

too, under and at the method his blessed Majesty takes to wean us from self, and cause us to lean wholly upon and trust wholly in him. But he does not spare the rod for our fleshly crying, and he is sure in the end to make us kiss both the rod and the hand which has appointed it. A faithful God do us harm! Impossible! No, no, he will never suffer his faithfulness to fail, nor the tenderness of his all-compassionate heart either. A few more hot fires and deep waters, and we shall be with our dear brother Martin; yes, and with our dear loving Three-One God, never, never to part again, nor to experience one more storm. O the blessedness of that glorious truth, "The sun shall be no more thy light by day, neither for brightness shall the moon give light unto thee, for the Lord shall be unto thee an everlasting light, and *thy God thy glory*." "Thy sun shall no more go down, neither shall thy moon withdraw itself; for the Lord shall be thine everlasting light, and the days of thy mourning shall be ended." (Isa. lx. 19, 20; Rev. xxi. 22, 23.) May the Lord enable you both, and me also, to live daily under the enjoyment of this glorious truth, "*Thy God thy glory!*" Here is real, unsullied glory; no sin, no filth to accompany it. No, no, at all times the same. Thy God in covenant love, at all times, and under all circumstances; thy glory for ever and ever. Well, thanks be to God, though our dear brother Martin has got the start of us, and has arrived first where God is all in all, we are in the King's high road, and under his own eye, yea, and are his special charge; so that we shall not be long before we join the happy throng, and unite in singing, "Glory to God in the highest!"

"More happy, but not more secure,
The glorified spirits in heaven."

Give my love to your minister, to the church, and to friends at large. O the blessedness of being one in and one with Christ! This is a union that can never be dissolved.

That the Lord may be with you, and bless you with sweet intercourse with himself, and a daily rest in his sweet bosom, is the prayer of, yours in the Lord,

Manchester, August 8, 1831.

W. G.

THE EXCEEDING GREATNESS OF THE POWER OF GOD IN THE SOUL OF SARAH WIGHT.

About the year 1643, and since, there lived in London one Sarah Wight, daughter to one Thomas Wight, some time of the Auditors' Office, and of the Exchequer Office, who was the son of Mr. Wight, some time minister of Daintry. Her mother was Mrs. Mary Wight, widow, who lived in Lawrence-Poultney Lane, by Canning-Street, London, whose father was Edward Persel, Esq., of Anstee, near Shrewsbury. Her former husband was Edward Vaughan, Esq., the King's Receiver and Surveyor for Northampton and Rutland shires, by whom she had Mr. Jonathan Vaughan, some time of All Soul's, Oxford.

This Mrs. Mary Wight fell into some deep affliction of spirit, and was vexed with sundry temptations; at which time, this, her daughter Sarah was piously educated by her grandmother, Mrs. Wight, of Daintry. And when it pleased God to speak peace to her mother's soul, and to dispel her darkness, she took home her daughter Sarah, who was now about nine years old, and employed her much in reading the Holy Scriptures; and though, for the present, she understood little of them, yet, afterwards, they proved of singular use to her, as will appear by what ensued.

This Sarah, from her childhood, was of a tender heart, and oft afflicted in spirit; yet her temptations were not very great till she was about twelve years old; after which they continued with more violence till April the 6th, 1647 (it being about four years). The beginning of her temptations was on this account:—The mother bade her do a small thing which she judged to be lawful and meet. The daughter did it doubtingly, fearing that it was unlawful; whereupon a great trembling fell upon her, both in her hands and body, being self-condemned. Also, about a month after, being abroad, she lost her hood. At her return, her mother asked her for it. She suddenly said that her grandmother had it. Satan, taking advantage of it, presently suggested to her that she was both a thief and a liar, which sins would shut her out of heaven; and that there was no remedy; but that she must be damned.

During these four years, she was oft in great extremity, and could not apprehend anything to be her portion but hell and wrath. At other times, she was tempted to believe that there was neither heaven nor hell, but what was in her own conscience; and, therefore, if she could but dispatch herself out of this life, there would be an end of all her sorrows. And hereupon she oft attempted to destroy herself by drowning, by stabbing, by strangling, by beating out her own brains; and so bruised and wounded herself as occasioned much weakness and many distempers for a long time after. But the Lord, in mercy, prevented her destruction; sometimes by one or other that came in time to hinder her from accomplishing it; sometimes stopping her in the very instant, nobody being near; sometimes by bringing to her mind such opposite texts of Scripture as laid a restraint upon her, and prevented the intended mischief. Many able ministers and many private Christians came to her, being acquainted with her sad condition, and tried all that they could to comfort her; and she would gladly have received comfort, but, as yet, it was hid from her eyes; and if, at any time, any glimmering of light appeared, it was soon eclipsed again. And thus she continued in grievous horror, both day and night, concluding that she was a castaway, a reprobate, walking continually in the midst of fire and brimstone, as one already in hell.

About a month before her deliverance, Satan's time of tormenting her being but short, her storms and tumults were greatest of all. She was so grievously hurried with temptations, and so terrified thereby, that she could find no rest for many days and nights together.

Whilst she was able to go abroad, her mother used to take her with her to church on the Lord's Days and lecture days. One lecture day, she was gone out before her mother, who, missing her, went to church; but, not finding her there, she immediately went and sent towards the Thames, to seek her; where, indeed, she had been with a purpose to have cast herself into the river, but was stayed by the power and goodness of God. Being found, she went with her mother to the lecture. In the sermon, something was spoken concerning God grafting the Jews into their olive again; after which, she said that she would not, for all the world, have missed hearing that sermon; and being asked why, she answered, "Because God will show mercy to the Jews; and they are the basest people on earth, and hate the very name of Christian, and much more Christ himself; and yet God will call them." This supported her at that time; but it stayed not with her; for she was again assaulted with horrible temptations to believe that there was no God, no heaven, and no hell but what she felt within herself.

One day, being violently assaulted with the temptation to believe that there was no hell but here in her conscience, and having a little white earthen cup in her hand, (as Mrs. Honeywood dealt with the Venice glass,) she said that she was as sure to be damned as that was to break, and therewithal threw it from her to break it; but it broke not. Again she said, "As sure as this cup will break, there is no hell," and threw it more violently against the farther side of the chamber; and yet it broke not. Her mother took it up, and said, "See, child, it is not broken." She got it again, and said and did the like four or five times; only the fifth time a little snip broke out. After her recovery, she still desired to drink out of that cup, to remind her of God's goodness to her in her despairing fits.

She often turned to Job iii. and Jer. xx. 14, where Job and Jeremiah cursed the day of their birth. "Job," said she, "cursed the day of his birth, saying, 'Wherefore hast thou brought me forth of the womb? O that I had given up the ghost, and no eye had seen me!' and Jeremiah cursed the man that brought tidings of his birth with bitter curses, because his mother's womb was not his grave; and said, 'Wherefore came I out of the womb to see labour and sorrow, that my days should be consumed with shame?' But," said she, "have not I much more cause to say so? for they were in a blessed condition; but I am cursed, and must be a firebrand of hell for ever." These, and many such like desperate expressions, she frequently used, but especially in the last month of her sorrows; at which time they increased daily upon her; so that she was weary of life, of herself, and of everything; she was, as it were, shattered all to pieces. Her tender mother watched her day and night, to prevent her from destroying herself, yet still hoping that the Lord, in his due time, would come in with comfort; and when this extremity had continued long, and that her mother was even tired out with continual watchings, she spoke to a friend, desiring that her daughter might, for a little time, be with her, which she willingly assented

to; but the Lord, in his mercy, prevented it; for, when her friend came for her, she was taken with such an exceeding trembling and weakness, that she was not able to go with her. Herenpon, her mother procured a good maid to help to look to her, who, at her coming, found her weeping most bitterly, and wringing her hands, saying, "I am a reprobate, a castaway. I never had a good thought in all my life. I have been under the power of sin ever since I can remember, even when I was but a child." This night was the darkest of all, when the joyful day of deliverance was nearest at hand; and as, about four years ago, in the beginning of her deep troubles and despair, she fell into a great trembling, so did she now again; and, weeping and wringing her hands, she said, "My earthly tabernacle is broken all to pieces; and what will the Lord do with me? If I should hang on gibbets, if I should be cut to pieces, if I should die the cruellest death that ever any did, I have deserved it, and would still justify God, yea, though he should cast me into hell." At this time, her hands and her feet were so clutched that she could not stand. She was also tempted to blaspheme God and die; and, when she was urged to speak, her tongue was so smitten that, for the time, she could not. A while after, being laid down, she said to her mother, "I will lie still, and hear what God will say to me. He will speak peace. If God will speak a word of peace at the last moment, I would be contented."

She lay still, as in a trance, from Tuesday, April the 6th, till the Saturday night after; only, now and then, she called for a little water; but took no other sustenance during all that period.

On Saturday night, April 10th, 1647, about midnight, she began to use the first expressions of comfort, even now, when all human help failed, and when all former means could not give it, yea, when she was made utterly incapable of receiving it that way; for now she was stricken both blind and deaf, her eyes being fast closed up. Her first speeches were, "My soul thirsts for the water of life; and I shall have it." This, in the ardency of her spirit, she repeated four times. She then called for a little water, whereof she drank three or four small cups; after which, she sat up, and, with a lowly, cheerful countenance, and with much brokenness of heart, tears trickling down her cheeks, she spoke with a low voice, and said, "Ah! that Jesus should come from the bosom of his Father, and take the nature of man upon him, and come in such a low estate, and lie in a manger. There are three sorts of people in the world, a higher, a middle, and a lower sort. Christ came to the lowest sort. He lay in a manger in a contemptible place. Do you not see an excellency in Him who came here to die for, even for sinners, yea, for the greatest sinners, for the chiefest sinners? A dying Christ for a denying Peter!" This she repeated three times. "Peter denied him; and yet he died for him. Go and tell Peter. Ah! Peter"— Here she paused and admired. "For a Peter, for a Mary Magdalene, for a thief on the cross, that none should despair. A crucified Christ for a crucified thief; a crucified Christ for a crucified thief! A persecuting Saul becomes a beloved Paul. For

the chiefest sinners! not the proud pharisee, but the poor publican. And this is faith, to believe a full Christ to a nothing creature, to me, the chiefest of sinners. Yet I obtained mercy. Christ came not to find faith, but to give faith. Christ came to me when I was in unbelief. There is a fountain opened for Judah and Jerusalem, for sin and uncleanness; a fountain, not streams, but an open fountain. It is open for Judah. Judah had played the harlot; yet God said to Judah, 'Return, though thou hast played the harlot with many lovers: return; for I am married unto thee.' For Judah and for Jerusalem! And what was Jerusalem? Her skirts were full of blood; her streets were full of blood. Yet the fountain is open for Judah and Jerusalem for sin and uncleanness, for all sins, for the greatest sins, for the chiefest sins and sinners. Who is this fountain? Jesus Christ; he is this fountain, a filling fountain, and never dry. Who is a God like unto thee? Pardoning sin, all sin, past, present, and to come; and not only pardoning sin, but passing by the transgressions of his heritage; passing by daily sins and frailties, he retains not his anger for ever; he is slow to wrath, but delights in mercy; he is slow to nothing but to wrath, but he is swift to mercy; his wrath is but a little; with everlasting kindness will he show mercy; and his mercy and his kindness are for ever. Christ was first crucified before he was glorified. Before you receive a Christ glorified, you must receive a Christ crucified."

With such and like gracious expressions, she continued till April the 10th, and then ceased, and lay, continuing blind and deaf, till April the 17th; and from April the 10th to April the 13th, she did neither speak nor eat, nor drink anything but the water aforementioned. Her mother laying her hand upon her, she said, "Why do you hinder my communion with God?"

On Tuesday, April the 13th, starting up suddenly, she said, "The devil fights with me as he did with Michael and his angels; but the angel shall prevail; the Lion of the tribe of Judah hath overcome him; the accuser of the brethren is cast out. Jesus Christ came to destroy the works of the devil; he took our nature upon him that he might be a partaker of our sufferings. Come, Lord Jesus, come! But why do I say, 'Come?' He is come; he hath dispossessed the strong man, and hath taken possession of my soul, and will dwell with me for ever. How near are the saints to Christ! they are his jewels; nay, they are the signet on his right hand, and the seal of his heart; they lie in his bosom." Laying her hand upon her breast, she said, "That which I most admire is, that Christ took our nature. Men and angels admire it, yea, and devils too, if they can. When the Lord doth any great thing, he puts his *I* to it: 'I, even I, am he;' 'I will make a new covenant;' 'I will write my laws in their hearts;' 'I will pardon your sins;' 'I change not.' Ah, what a foolish creature was I! I could not endure to hear any one speak of the devil; and I was as bad as he in distrusting the God who died for me. O that the world knew Jesus Christ! sure they would not distrust him, they would not despise nor persecute him. Christ taught Simon how to bear the

cross; and he bore it first himself. He drank of the cup which his Father gave him to drink; he drank the dregs, the very dregs of it; yet had he no sin. And shall we think much to drink of it, when he drank of it before us? O love him, love him!"

(To be continued.)

"THE LORD MAKETH POOR, AND MAKETH RICH."

My very dear Brother in tribulation's path,—The Lord is indeed manifestly with you, for he alone can hold you up and make you stand, and he will bruise Satan under your feet. This is his faithful promise to all his people, of whom, I entertain no shadow of doubt, you, by eternal election, are constituted one. The Lord hath chosen you in the furnace of affliction, and the settled purposes of heaven are constantly bringing forth for you and me such things as are truly needful for us, but not such things as our fleshly appetites desire. Under the predominating influence of this deceitful flesh, I feel that, could I possess the ability, none should be so wise, so strong, so holy, so successful, and so happy as myself; but it is truly mortifying to this beastly part of me to find the reverse of all these desires to be my every day's portion; for the holy desire of heaven is, that the flesh must wither, and its flowers fade, and the Word of God, which destroys it, must stand for ever. What can this word be but the Son of David, and the Son of God, through which the gospel is preached unto us by the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven? Yea, this glorious King shall reign in righteousness until all his and our enemies are put down under his feet; and surely we have no greater enemy than the flesh which fighteth and oppresses us daily, and, were it not for our Captain, Jesus, would swallow us up. Poverty and affliction, both in the inward and outward sense, are a very bitter cup, and the effects are both painful and corroding, and of these both you and myself have been called to drink. So was Job, so was David, so was Jeremiah, and so was Jesus Christ, who was a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief. We know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, who, though he was rich, yet for our sakes became poor, that we, through his poverty, may be made rich. Poverty seems disgraceful, but honest poverty is better than deceitful riches, and a poor man is better than a rich liar. But you, my dear brother, have had to wade in deep waters of affliction, and I have often felt much grief for you, and wished I could help you, vainly thinking that if I had the purse of some rich man you should not want. Alas, alas! I fear, were that the case, my base deceitful heart would find out some excuse, however poor, to keep my money to myself. Man is a creature of circumstances, and new circumstances will call forth, and bring to light, new ideas, new desires, purposes, plans, companies, passions, joys, sorrows, words, manners, and actions. When Hazael was a servant he scorned to do what the prophet predicted, but when he became a king he did it. No money, wisdom, beauty, strength, goodness, friends, nor any creature-goodness must be our confidence. Jesus, and Jesus alone,

is the confidence of all the ends of the earth. The heart of a sinner doth safely trust in him.

Last Thursday was a most wretched, gloomy, and melancholy day indeed to me. O how I did wish I was anything but a preacher! I groaned, and sighed, and wept, and made supplication unto the Lord, but he seemed not to regard me. I went to the chapel, and there I was tossed up and down like a locust; but although I preached in misery, the word was blessed to two persons in particular, who have spoken of it since. When I went up to my bed at night these words were with me, and I gathered some help from them, and after going to sleep, awoke with them on my mind; "They shall fight against thee, but they shall not prevail against thee, for I am with thee, saith the Lord, to deliver thee." By these and other words of the Lord, opening and acting on my mind in the morning, I became like Naphtali, as an hind let loose, and could give goodly words, even words of truth and soberness, yea, words of joy and praise. I felt that there surely is an end, that my expectation should not be cut off, and that ere long I should go to see my dear Lord Jesus.

"For sighing and sadness I joy shall receive,
And share in the gladness of all that believe."

To day I have not quite forgotten it, and the clouds are beginning to gather, and a sly old thief is whispering in my ear, "But how will it be to-morrow?" I answered, "The Lord will provide." "How do you know?" said he. Here I begin to stagger; 'tis a quarter past nine o'clock on Saturday night, and about supper time, so I must say, "Good night."

My love to all the brethren; and I would say to you and all brethren, "Pray for us."

I remain, yours very affectionately in Jesus,

London, Jan 7, 1843.

J. S.

"FAINT, YET PURSUING."

True religion is a great mystery which is completely hidden from the wise and prudent of this world. Although I feel to be neither wise nor prudent, but ignorant, foolish, and base above all, I often fear that this divine mystery is hidden from me. I cannot lift up my head, and boast of my great establishment in the truth of God, as many do; for I cannot say that Jesus is the Lord at any time, unless I feel his power. I cannot root or ground myself in the way of life, nor feel the reality and blessedness of one thing that God has revealed in his word, except it be applied to my heart by the Lord the Spirit. Impotence, death, emptiness, and misery, with evils unspeakable, are all that I can find in myself; and I cannot rise above these things, or look out of self, when I please. It is sweet to me when my heart is, in any measure, lifted up to the Lord, and bedewed with meekness, repentance, love, and gratitude. I long to mount up with wings like eagles, but find my wings clipped, and then fear that I have none. I seek to be free from every shackle; but, lo! imprisonment and

bonds await me. I would be somebody, but am made to be nobody. I desire to run, but am thankful if I can creep. I covet fulness, but am happy to get a crumb; and crave for drink to satisfy, but deem it to be a mercy indeed if one drop is bestowed upon me from the Fountain of the water of life. Many seem to be content that all fulness dwells in Jesus, and cry out against frames and feelings; but, unless we can feel Jesus' presence, and find him in our heart, what does his fulness avail us, or what comfort can we derive from the bare knowledge that it is written in the word that Christ is All and in all?

It is a great privilege that you possess to sit under Mr. W—. When I heard him preach, I thought that I should be well content, instead of preaching to others, to sit down as a hearer of his. I felt a power in his preaching which I have rarely found in that of other ministers. It was commended to my conscience, and touched my heart. Will you remember me affectionately to him?

I desire to be thankful that my public testimony at —— should be useful to you. It is a great wonder that God should condescend to make use of one so base, so ignorant, and so dark, for the comfort of any of his children; indeed, it seems almost too much to credit. But I am aware that God works in such a way that no flesh shall glory in his presence. Yours sincerely for the truth's sake,

Feb. 16th, 1843.

G. B. I.

BROOK'S LETTERS, No. VI.

My dear Sir,—I long to hear from you, to know how you get on in the best of all paths—that of tribulation. I should have written before had I followed my inclination, but was fearful you would think my interference unbecoming or impertinent. Yet, God is my witness, I long after you in the bowels of Jesus Christ, desiring that you may be a partaker of the grace that is in him according to his mighty power.

It is, in truth, a hard thing. The first creation is a marvellous proof of the power of our Lord, but the second exceeds it in every point—in wisdom, in strength, in beauty, in glory; and as he finds us without form and void, and with darkness on the face of the deep, it is plain nothing short of an almighty hand could mould us into a conformity to the image of God. If indeed he found us only without form and void, the difficulty of the work would not be so great. We should then, at least, be passive in his hand. But we know the great deep rages and swells. Our enmity and rebellion, our ignorance and presumption, our perverseness and confidence, dispute with the Almighty every inch of the ground. He is, therefore, obliged to use sharp methods with us, to send fire and sword, for he declares he will wash away the filth of the daughters of Zion, and purge the blood of Jerusalem from the midst thereof with the spirit of judgment and the spirit of burning. (Isa. iv. 4.) To have our corruptions brought to light is by no means pleasing to us who like to be pure in our own eyes; and to find their power too great for us does not agree with

our plans, according as we purpose to ourselves to get the mastery. But such discoveries are needful, otherwise we never could feel the filthiness of our nature, and never should look to the rock that is higher than we. But every step from the pit to the stronghold, from the miry clay to the rock, is of the Lord's guiding and establishing. He leads us through fire and through water. It is his own arm that brings salvation to us; and, hence, in the fiery trial he sustains us when we must either go back or be drowned. And in this way he discovers to us the nothingness and corruption of all those things which our flesh esteems. One after another is weighed in the balance, and kicks the beam; so we are led on. Our understanding is opened to see this vileness, and our hearts are disposed freely to give up the affections for them. Moses chose rather to endure affliction. It was a matter of choice with him. Why so? Because faith within satisfied him that both he and they continuing together must be damned. He knew it was declared of old by God, "That nation will I judge." He therefore "refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter. He refused this and chose the other. He was persuaded destruction awaited such an honour, and, further, he had an eye to something else; he had respect to the recompense of reward.

Sweet teaching, my dear friend, is that which has in it mercy; not a stripe, not a frown but what flows from the most perfect of all love, to make us sick of ourselves and of this world, that we may be in love with the loveliest, the altogether lovely, and that we may be partakers of a better, that is, an enduring substance. Shall we not, then, be subject to the Father of spirits, and live, knowing that his corrections are for our profit, that we might be partakers of his holiness?

In this view all our complaints will issue in praises. You complain that you are hard in heart, dead in soul, shut up in prayer, barren in spirit, dark in mind, confounded and confused, tossed to and fro, yet oftentimes motionless and lifeless, callous and unconcerned.

This is in itself a bad state, and we cannot deny it; but not so when accompanied with a feeling sense of its painfulness and a looking-out for relief from it. A thousand things of this kind will be opened to you, and yet you will never come to the bottom of them. But what is it all for but to make Christ Jesus precious, to exalt the Most High, and to debase the creature. To show that we are literally as the clay in the hand of the potter, the hardest of all things to submit to, to prove that we are nothing but recipients from the hands of God, the greatest of all things to confess and live in. We are not only naked, but have a thick covering; not only poor, but esteem ourselves exceeding rich. We are not only, in truth, fools, but are wise in our own conceit; we are not only nothing, but will be everything.

These feelings make the rod needful, chastisement profitable, and tearing down indispensable. This never yet was pleasant to flesh and blood, nevertheless, afterwards it worketh the peaceable fruits of righteousness to them who are exercised thereby.

May the Lord God of Israel be with thee in all thy ways, deliver thee from all evil, bring thee forth from the furnace, and establish thee as a light in Zion. We much need such. Truly "the harvest is plenteous, but the labourers are few." So prays your affectionate and unworthy,

W. J. BROOK.

AN INQUIRY.

Messrs. Editors,—May I be allowed, through the medium of the *Gospel Standard*, to ask your correspondent, Mr. Gadsby, to favour me and some others with his thoughts on that portion of God's word which is recorded in Matthew xvi. 23? Did Jesus, when he turned to Peter, and said, "Get thee behind me, Satan," intend to be understood as calling Peter actually *Satan*, or, in other words, *devil*?

Yours respectfully in gospel-bonds,

April 7th, 1843.

AN INQUIRER FOR TRUTH.

POETRY.

THE HAPPY CHOICE.

Lord, might I make but one request,	Has sweetened too the sickly draught,
And that to choose were left to me,	And fill'd my soul with joy and peace.
I'd ask, "Christ formed within my breast,	His blood has made my conscience clean,
Enjoyed to all eternity."	Once and again, yea, and again;
Why make this choice? the world inquires,	And peace, the fruit of cancelled sin,
Why not ask worldly ease and gain?	Has my rebellious passions slain.
"What! can you choose temptation's	His name, his merits are my plea;
fires,"	His mercy felt still makes me bold;
Professors ask, "this wish 't attain?"	His love commends itself to me
To me the matter's plain, but you	With joys that never can be told.
Are ignorant of the secret still;	His fulness is an endless spring,
Therefore, I turn to God's dear few,	From thence I draw by faith, and live.
His sealed ones, who know his will.	Answers to prayer I have, and sing;
Dear saints, 'twas grace that taught my	And to him all the glory give.
soul	On him I build, on him I hang
To make the Lord my heartfelt choice,	My precious soul's eternal all;
And all my burdens on him roll,	Not fearing 'midst the infernal gang,
My Friend, enthroned above the skies.	While Jesus lives, that I shall fall.
I believe that he has chosen me;	By his own everlasting arms,
His pardoning blood I feel within;	He holds me fast in his embrace;
My spirit longs with Christ to be,	My soul is ravished with his charms,
To see his face, and cease from sin.	I cannot help but sing his praise.
For his dear name I've suffered loss,	I'm jealous for his honour's sake,
My health, my property, my name,	And long to glorify his name:
And count it all but dung and dross	And often think my heart will break,
For Christ, through whom salvation came.	With great desire 't exalt his fame.
Once I in him could nothing see,	When in the closet, or his word,
Nor did desire to know his ways;	Or 'midst his saints in union blest,
But now his name's so dear to me,	My fainting soul beholds the Lord,
I'd live and die in his embrace.	I weep, and heaven is in my breast.
His love has soothed my sorrows oft,	I envy not e'en monarchs here;
And bowed my stubborn will to his;	I ask not honour, pomp, or fame;

Let me among thy poor appear,
And weep, and love, and praise thy
name.

How, think you, therefore, could I choose
The world, and let my Saviour go?
I cannot; Lord, do not refuse
A worm thy presence while below.

Whate'er thou then shouldst bring me
through,

I'll grasp thee in my arms by faith,
And sing, " 'Tis well, I soon shall view
Thy face beyond the Jordan, death."

O, for the bliss I then shall feel!
My soul's o'ercome! in tears I bow!
A sinful worm, deserving hell,
I feel the pledge of glory now.

Lord, give me power to tell around
The wonders thou hast done for me;
"What a dear Saviour I have found,"
That Zion may rejoice in thee.

I ask it at thy gracious hands,
Lord, pardon, if I ask amiss;
O, send the news to distant lands,
A sinner saved! a hair of bliss!

Bedworth, Warwickshire, March 6th, 1843.

Leave it on record, brethren dear,
How I do love my Saviour's name;
That many yet unborn may hear,
And weep, and catch the sacred flame.

Redeeming love is now my theme,
And shall be, too, before the throne.
Dear Christ, my soul shall sing of him,
Though all things else be lost and gone.

He lives! my life, my comfort lives!
And I through him shall live above!
What joy the sweet assurance gives!
O, Zion, praise the God of love!

The ties a tender parent feels
Entwine my bleeding heart around;
But Christ himself to me reveals,
So that my soul would leap its bound.

Still I his pleasure here would stay,
And would a witness for him be,
Grant my desire, my Lord, I pray,
I'm sick of love; I die for thee.

And at thy throne when I appear,
'Midst thy redeemed I'll raise my head,
And shout, "Behold! a wonder's here!"
For me, for me, the Saviour bled."

G. T. C.

THE PENITENT'S SONG OF PRAISE.

Did ever one of Adam's race
More need, dear Lord, thy matchless
grace,

Ere this rebellious heart of mine
Was taught to yield to love divine?

Vile was my heart, deep plunged in sin,
A dismal den of thieves within;
Where ev'ry lust presumed to dwell,
The hateful progeny of hell.

How great the power, how vast the sway,
That first constrain'd me to obey!

Dover.

How large the grace thou didst impart,
That conquer'd sin, and won my heart!

But, lo! the chief of sinners now,
I'm brought before thy throne to bow.
Surely this mighty power from thee
Can conquer all which conquer me.

Hail! dearest Lord, my choicest Love;
By pity drawn from realms above.
Eternal praise to Love Divine,
That won a heart so vile as mine!

R. H.

GLEANNING.

Others have been possessed with legions of devils; some sink in black despair; others have been bowed down by Satan; and some have been both mad and dumb; some in the shadows of death; others in the horrible pit. But love has still dived beneath them, and brought them up as on eagles' wings. This precious cord of everlasting love angled sweetly after poor Jonah, when fatherly displeasure had raised a storm, and cast him overboard, and at last brought him up from the bowels of hell. In short, there are no depths that the elect of God have fallen into, where love hath not waded after them, and brought them up. It brought Manasseh up from the magic depths of Satan, and David from deep calling unto deep, the very echoes or resoundings of hell itself.—*Huntington.*

THE
GOSPEL STANDARD,
OR,
FEEBLE CHRISTIAN'S SUPPORT.

"Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness; for they shall be filled."—Matt. v. 6.

"Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began."—2 Tim. i. 9.

"The election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded."—Rom. xi. 7.

"If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest.—And they went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch; and he baptized him.—In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost."—Acts viii. 37, 38; Matt. xxviii. 19.

No. 94. OCTOBER, 1843. VOL. IX.

A NEW YEAR'S MEDITATION,
BY JAMES OSBOURN, MINISTER OF THE GOSPEL, BALTIMORE.

(Concluded from page 261.)

PART II.

O God! as at the close of this year I am, through thy mercy, in possession of a good hope that I shall be saved at last in Christ thy Son with an everlasting salvation, to the praise of free and amazing grace and the eternal honour of all thy adorable perfections; and as I most sincerely desire to be found a follower of them who, through faith and patience, inherit the promises, and to serve thee to the best of my ability, so long as I am detained in this lower world; and as I know not how long that may be, nor what trials, difficulties, and afflictions I may be called to pass through, in the course of the ensuing year, 1826; and not being willing to trust myself to the care and keeping of any but thee alone, as thou hast made me sensible of my own weakness and the power of Satan's temptations, I would humbly look to thee, O thou Maker of heaven and earth, and Preserver of Israel! to continue to espouse my cause, to maintain my right, to keep me in thy fear, to guide my feet in the way of peace, to preserve me from sin and error, and every hurtful snare and poisonous delusion, while passing through the year upon which I am now about to enter. "O Lord! hear; O Lord! forgive; O Lord! hearken and do; defer not, for thine own sake, O my God!" (Dan. ix. 19.) O Lord! weak and ignorant as I am, and unworthy of the least of thy mercies, yet, having obtained help of thee, I continue to this day witnessing, both to small and great, saying no other things than those which the prophets and Moses did say should come;

that Christ should suffer, and that he should be the first that should rise from the dead, and should show light unto the people and to the Gentiles; and as this help has been afforded me through this year, without any merit on my part, so I beseech thee to continue the same through the year ensuing, and enable me to make a wise improvement of time and of the gifts and qualifications bestowed upon me for the edifying of thy church in love.

Moreover, I beseech thee to grant that thy Holy Spirit may yet more illuminate my mind and inspire my heart and tongue, wean me from the world and all its dying interests, raise my affections above, open up to me the great mysteries of redemption, and establish me in the truths of the gospel, so that I may not soon be shaken in mind, nor moved from my own steadfastness, nor be carried about by every wind of doctrine, as are those who are ever learning and are never able to come to the knowledge of the truth. At the same time, I beseech thee to keep me from being vainly puffed up by a fleshly mind, intruding into those things which thou, O God! hast seen fit to conceal from mortal men, who, by trying curiously to pry into them, subvert the right way and the souls of others, endangering their own souls also by their pride.

Moreover, I beseech thee, O Lord! to keep me alive to thee and thy cause and interest, by continuous supplies of grace; and feed me also with spiritual knowledge and understanding. Grant me thy holy and blessed Spirit, that I may find the throne of grace a Bethel and a real banqueting house to my soul; and thither enable me to go boldly, by day and by night, to seek thy face, and to obtain mercy and find grace to help in every time of need.

I also entreat thee, O Lord! to assist me in reading thy holy word, that I may do it with all interest and intenseness of desire; and do thou shed forth beams of divine light upon it, that I may thereby be thoroughly furnished to all good works; and make full proof of my ministry, and that I do the work of an evangelist, by preaching the gospel "not in word only, but in power, and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance," so that it may be a savour of life unto many, and not a dead letter unto men.

I beseech thee also, O Lord! to increase wisdom in me, and spiritual strength; and help me to live to thy honour, and to seek the welfare of Zion; not to cloak the truth for fear of offending men, nor to hide it in a napkin, under a pretence that the ungodly will make use of it to their own injury; nor to adulterate it to make it palatable to the carnal appetite; nor to treat of it in a cold, phlegmatic way, as though it were void of divine importance, and a matter of indifference whether it be received or rejected; nor to speak of it in ambiguous terms, that it may be construed in various ways. Neither suffer me, O Lord! to abridge the liberty of those whom thou hast made freely to know the truth, by sending them to Mount Sinai, where are the cloud, the smoke, and the dreadful windy storm and tempest, and death in all its dread array; from which place and scenery they have escaped in the light and power of the gospel, and are now sheltered at the foot of Calvary, being fellow-citizens

with the saints, and of the household of God. As these thy free-born children cannot feed on the flimsy harangues of school-boys, nor on empty oratory, nor on fine-spun lectures on the fitness of things, nor on pharisaical colourings, nor even on sound doctrines preached from theory in the letter, in a starched and formal manner; but on the truth wet with the dew of heaven, and flowing from a heart seasoned with salt; so, O Lord! grant unto me a mind fraught with the marrow and fatness of the gospel, that thereby I may feed the souls of those whom thou hast enlarged and favoured with the teachings of thy Spirit and his testimony of Christ in their consciences.

I also beg of thee, O God! that, being kept from dry morality and from being at ease in Zion, having a name to live while dead in soul, I may enjoy the life and spirit, the power and sweetness of the word of Christ coming in upon my understanding and conscience, with the unction of the Holy Ghost, and may also be enabled to set it home upon the hearts of them that hear me by the same Spirit.

I likewise beseech thee, O God! never to suffer me, in any one instance, to disparage the gospel, or to draw a dark veil over thy dear Son, by trying to exalt human nature above its proper level, or by setting myself forth as a pattern, instead of preaching Christ crucified, the sun, the shield, the glory, and the rest of his chosen ones; but help me, O thou mighty God of Jacob! constantly to abide by the testimony which thou hast given me, and not to fear the faces of men, nor court their smiles, nor regard the words of flatterers with their lips, which are, at best, but as a morning cloud, and as the early dew, that pass away. Encourage me, likewise, to go with all my grievances, trials, difficulties, troubles, distresses, afflictions, and temptations, to thy mercy-seat, to be redressed when and in what manner thy wisdom shall see fit. Be pleased also to keep me from becoming carnal and worldly, from pride and vain glory; and rather make me more and more humble, meek, lowly, tractable, submissive, and spiritually-minded; and may it be my meat and drink, like my dear Saviour, in any measure to do thy will, O God! from my heart.

And I earnestly beseech thee, O Lord my strength! to keep me from craving the esteem or seeking the company of men, however high they may stand in a profession of religion or in the ministry, however orthodox they may be accounted, however splendid their talent, however much caressed and followed by the multitude, if they be not savoury in their conversation, nor conversant with the divine influences of thy Spirit on their own souls, nor observant of the operation of thy hand towards them, nor mindful of what passes within them from day to day; with such keep me from forming any intimacy, seeing that they are wells without water, and clouds without rain. But let me not stand aloof from men of truth, lovers of good things, preachers of righteousness, sincere, humble, meek, contrite, spiritual, prayerful, and watchful men; but may such be my delight and my companions; and with such may I be favoured to take sweet counsel, as they are the excellent of the earth, and with them true wisdom is found.

I likewise entreat thee, O Lord! to give me still more clearly to see the true and real state and condition of thy Zion, and what time

of the night it now is with her; whether it is not the time which was shadowed out by Saul and the corrupt state of the kingdom; for she appears to be fast sinking into that corrupt and carnal state; and people generally are as well satisfied, and as greatly delighted, and as much carried away with the apparent increase and prosperity of outward profession and fashionable religion of the present time, as the children of Israel ever were with their mighty and gigantic king, whose external appearance was pleasing and bewitching to a carnal Israelite. Saul was "a choice young man, and goodly; and there was not among the children of Israel a goodlier person than he: from his shoulders and upwards he was higher than any of the people." (1 Sam. ix. 2.) But though the people were so greatly pleased with him and with his outward appearance, yet thou wast not, O God! for thou sawest what was in him; and thou gavest him to the people in thine anger, and didst take him away in thy wrath. In like manner, O God! are the people of this generation carried away with the fine and noble appearance of mystical Saul. All its beauty is in its outside, a fair show in the flesh; while, within, it is rottenness and corruption; and yet empty professors are as much enamoured with it as were the carnal Israelites with Saul when they cried out, "God save the king!" (1 Sam. x. 24.) But, O Lord! may I rather mourn with those that mourn for the affliction of Zion than join with those who are rejoicing in a thing of nought, and walking in the light of sparks kindled by a false fire, and delighted with a state of things which was shadowed out by Saul and his corrupt kingdom.

Grant also, O Lord! that I may not become insensible how small is the number of those who can properly be denominated good shepherds and faithful ministers of Christ, nor yet blind to how many carnal priests and mere letter preachers there are in this day crowding about the gates of Zion, crying, "Lo! here, and Lo! there," and deceiving their thousands, being also themselves deceived; of whom it may be said without any breach of charity, that their exhortation is of deceit, and of uncleanness, and in guile. Although thou hast not put them in trust with the gospel, yet they speak not as pleasing God, but men; and they, on all occasions, use flattering words, as discerning Christians know; and a cloak of covetousness, as thou art witness; and of men seek they glory, both of professors and profane, and are burdensome, as were not the apostles of Christ; nor are they gentle among their flocks, as is a nurse with her children; but, being anxious to make a gain of them, they impart unto them not the gospel of Christ, but the commandments of men, because they would keep them in awe for filthy lucre's sake. From all such impostors, deceivers, vain janglers, perverters of the gospel of Christ, time-servers, and men-pleasers, physicians of no value, but proud boasters, subverting souls by their doctrine of the law, for ever deliver me, O God!

I moreover beseech thee, thou Preserver of Israel! to keep me from falling on the rock of presumption, from sinking in the quicksand of free will, from touching the mount of carnal popularity, and

from approaching the shelf of strong delusion, into which thou bringest those who receive not the love of the truth that they may be saved; and if there be any other thing that is contrary to sound doctrine, I humbly beg to be preserved from it, that I may not dishonour thee or thy cause by my doctrine or my practice; but may I rather, by the effectual working of thy Spirit and the grace of my Redeemer, walk worthy of the vocation wherewith I am called, and be more humble, more thankful, more prayerful, more watchful, more resigned to my allotment in life, and more submissive to thy divine will in all things.

Grant likewise, O God of my life! that I may be as a polished shaft in thy quiver, to speak thy word with all boldness, and be abundantly fruitful and useful in thy vineyard, nor ever grow weary in well doing, knowing that in due season I shall reap, if I faint not. May I also, if it be thy blessed will, have the happiness of seeing the present fleshly system of gospel profession overturned, and the whole tribe of carnal letter-preachers vanish out of sight, and be no more; and, in their stead, a host of men raised up who shall be valiant for the truth, contenders for the right way of the Lord, bold for the honour of Christ as a complete and perfect Saviour, lovers of the souls of men, spiritually-minded, apt to teach, patient, in meekness instructing those who set themselves in opposition to the truth, pitiful, courteous, not fearing the faces of men, nor having men's persons in admiration because of advantage; and under the ministry of such may I behold thy church rise from her present beclouded, mournful, low state, shake herself from the dust, and put on her beautiful garments, loosing herself from the bands of her neck, as being redeemed without money; and to thee will I ascribe all the honour, glory, and praise of so great a work, O God! Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, blessed for ever. Amen.

Grant me also, O Lord! spiritual discernment to distinguish rightly the fellowship of saints in the gospel from that which, in our day, is called "church-fellowship," which, having a garb of religion, is yet carnal, being brought about by letter-preaching, and kept alive by party spirit; while the true church is brought together by the Spirit of the Lord, and *their* fellowship consists in the experimental acquaintance with God in Christ, as justifying them freely by his grace, and forgiving them all trespasses through the blood of Jesus, knowing each other as being in the Lord, and not merely as church members. May I also know the difference between a letter-preacher and a minister of the Spirit; to see which requires more discernment than is possessed by many, though the difference is as wide as between Saul the son of Kish, and David the man after God's own heart. Saul possessed all the external trappings and advantages of appearance calculated to catch the eyes and ears of carnal Israelites; whilst David possessed the inward adornings of the Spirit of grace, and was hunted as a partridge is hunted. And so it is now. May I, therefore, O God! be enabled by thee so to discern the spirits, that I may ever shun Saul and his host, and accompany David.

JAMES OSBOURN.

TWO COVENANTS; OR, THE LAW OF FAITH AND WORKS DISTINGUISHED.

"Received ye the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?"—
Gal. iii. 2.

Courteous Reader,—It is not my intention to justify or vindicate the person, character, life, preaching, or writings of every one who is called an Antinomian. I will defend no sort of Antinomians but such as are born again of the Holy Ghost, who live under the dominion of grace, and whose conduct and conversation are agreeable to the measure of faith received.

Those who allow of no prayer for temporal things, who allow of any salvation in popery, who deny a second application of the blood of sprinkling, who speak lightly of prayer, and talk of the fatherly severity of God being no punishment to his children, I have nothing to do with, for these notions are as false as the Bible is true. The point I insist upon is, that the nature of the law, which is holy, just, and good, together with its requirements, love to God and our neighbour, are secured to us in the purpose of God, the covenant of grace, the fulness of Christ, and the hand of the Spirit, and are produced in the souls of all God's elect by the operations of the Holy Ghost.

And although the rod out of Zion includes both the nature and demands of the inferior rod of Moses, yet these two ministrations must not be jumbled together. God has two covenants, one of works and the other of grace; these are called the law of works and the law of faith. The one is a ministration of condemnation, the other of salvation. One is a ministry of the letter, the other of the Spirit. One is a voice of words, the other the word of life. They must be kept apart. The law is not of faith, but of works; nor is faith of the law, but of grace. The one was graven on tables of stone and written on parchment, the other is put in the mind and written on the heart. The former was a law of the hand, and might be put in the pocket; the latter is put in the mind and kept in the heart. The former is the strength of sin, (1 Cor. xv. 56,) the ministration of death, (2 Cor. iii. 7,) and of condemnation; (2 Cor. iii. 9;) the latter is the ministration of pardon, reconciliation, righteousness, life, and salvation. To him that expects life, sanctification, or perfection by the works of the law, the reward is reckoned of debt. The law is the labourer's rule: "This do, and thou shalt live;" his reward is of works, and if by works, then it is no more of grace. "But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness, his reward is reckoned of grace, (or free bounty,) and if by grace, then it is no more of works." In the law, God's will of commandments is made known to the servant what he will have done, and what he will have left undone, and what may be expected by the servant if the Master's will be obeyed. God's will of purpose and of promise is made known by the Spirit in the law of faith to the pre-adopted sons: "Having made known to us the mystery of his will." This good will of purpose reveals what is to be believed, received, and expected by the heirs of promise, and

all of grace. To the sons it is given to know these mysteries of the kingdom, but not to the servants: "The servant knoweth not what his Lord doeth;" to him it is spoken in parables, and the preaching of it is to him foolishness. These two covenants, these two rules, these two laws, together with the bond women and the free women, the child of the flesh and the child of the Spirit, the servant and the son, must be kept asunder, by an "earnest contention for the faith once delivered to the saints;" for there are certain men crept in unawares, who are ever blending these two covenants together, by vain jangling, knowing neither what they say nor whereof they affirm. One gospelsizes the ministration of the killing letter, while another legalizes the dispensation of the Spirit. One ridicules the sovereignty, impeaches the justice, and contemns the counsel of his Maker, and debases him to a level with the sinner, while another exalts the free-agency and perfection of the rebel above him. One strips the bond-child of his rule, and makes it the only rule of the son's life; another applies God's good-will to the briars and thorns, which are nigh unto cursing, and debases the heir of promise. Thus, one dresses up the law and robs the gospel, the other strips the heir to adorn the slave. One sets up Moses (whose office it is to accuse the legalist) on the throne of Zion's King, and renders the Lord's government so imperfect, that his subjects have no rule but what is fetched from the servant, who was no more than a witness of the grace and truth which were to come by his Master; another enforces a perfect obedience to the servant's rule, before we can obtain favour of the King, degrading the merit of the Sovereign, to exalt the servant and the letter. But as it was in the beginning, so it is now, and ever shall be; for Moses had in old time, hath now, and will have, in every city, them that preach him.

Every chosen vessel, when the commandment comes with power to revive sin and slay the sinner, turns his feet to the legal testimonies, makes haste and delays not to keep the commandments, as the only way that seems right to a man; but ancient experience, as well as modern, teaches us that all would have fainted unless they had believed.

A believing view of Christ, submission to the sovereign will of God revealed in him, and a cordial reception of him as our wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption, are the first acts of obedience that stand for anything in God's account; and he gives the believing soul a sensibility of his approbation by the pardon of his sins, the powerful operations of his Spirit, a sense of divine love, the enjoyment of peace and reconciliation, enlargement of heart, deliverance from the fear of death, wrath, and bondage, and by all the joys of a rising, lively, and glorious hope. While the believer's will lies straight or runs parallel with the sovereign will of the Father in Christ Jesus, he walks with God and takes heaven with him; he heareth not rebuke, nor is there any dreadful sound in his ears, nor is he afraid of evil tidings; his heart is fixed, trusting in the Lord. But if he neglects the means of grace, omits prayer, and aims not at keeping communion with God, though the commandments say no-

thing about these things, yet he is summoned by his conscience to another hearing, and at another bar, where inquisition is made strictly, and the cry of the humble attended to. Here the believer finds that with a froward man the Lord will show himself froward, with a perverse child he will show himself perverse, with a perfect one he will show himself perfect, and with an upright man he will show himself upright. At this bar humbling grace attends both the inquisition and the chastening rod, which cannot be the case in the court of judicature; nor can humbling grace be obtained by a rule that worketh wrath, where justice will by no means clear the guilty. No man, either saint or sinner, was humbled, softened, or sweetened at that bar. Devils charged with folly, and desperate rebels, are both witnesses of this truth, who are obliged to stand the fiery test when they would fain fly out of God's hand. Every awakened sinner (as before observed) flies to the law as his only rule of life, walk, conduct, and conversation, and he finds by experience that there is nothing but destruction and misery in all his ways till he bows to the better yoke, and submits to another rule, which is attended with saving health, and directs his steps to the way of life and path of peace.

Under that galling, unbearable yoke, reader, by which thou couldst neither live, walk, nor conduct thyself, these legal gentlemen wish to bring thy neck again; for inexperienced men know nothing savingly of the gospel rule, therefore they can form no just idea of the immortal ties of love, the dominion of grace, the powerful operations of the Spirit, and a heartfelt union with Christ. They know of no bonds or cords but the slavish fear of death and hell, and therefore enforce personal holiness and good works from the law, which was the word of the ancient spies, who came in to spy out the liberty of the saints, and then sent the justified Galatians, who had begun in the Spirit, to the law, to be made perfect by the flesh; whereas, he who is subjected to the will of the Father of spirits "is chastened for his profit, and made a partaker of God's holiness;" (Heb. xii. 10;) and, being joined to the Lord, he is one spirit, and by virtue of this union he receives grace, strength, and a fresh supply of the Spirit, to prepare and qualify him for every good word and work. And this soul-satisfying union is felt and enjoyed as long as a saint walks with God in humble submission and resignation to his sovereign will; but if he resist the will of his God, by disputing against or opposing his decrees, by murmuring at the daily cross, or fretting at different changes of heart, or at trying and intricate providences, he makes to himself crooked paths, and he that goes therein shall not enjoy peace. He acts like Jonah; runs counter to his rule; the storm pursues him, and in time sinks him, till out of the belly of hell he cries, conscious that he has observed lying vanities, and forsaken his own mercies; the thoughts of which and his base ingratitude constrain him once more to fix his longing eyes, not on Sinai, but on the mercy seat in the holy temple; after which, in answer to a few confessions and supplications put up, he comes forth again, crying, "Salvation is of the Lord." But if he will again dispute the point, and resist the will

of his Father, after a few expostulations, a violent heat shall wither all his joys and comforts, and an east wind shall beat upon his head till he faints, and when he comes to himself he will say, "Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven," which seems by those words to be the only rule both of angels and the spirits of just men made perfect; for what else can be the only rule of the family of heaven and earth but the good will of God in Christ Jesus, seeing angels themselves stand not on the tottering basis of free-will, but are elected and confirmed by sovereign grace in Christ Jesus, who is the Head of all principality and power?

And whether this good will of God in Christ be revealed in a commandment or a promise, the glorious blessing is life in both, and is a free gift: "I know that his commandment is life everlasting." (John xii. 50.) "And this is the promise that he hath promised us, even eternal life." (1 John ii. 25.) While the Master's will of commandments, respecting the desolate woman and her children, keeps the bond fraternity all their lifetime subject to bondage, the Master, standing not on the disposition of the servant's heart, but on the goodness of the work, and declaring the offender in one point to be guilty of all,—under this dispensation he lives, which makes him hate coming to a reckoning; under this he dies, which makes him wish for a covenant with death and an agreement with hell. Convinced that the bed which he hath made is too short for a resting place, and his legal covering too narrow to hide his guilt, a consciousness of this will force him to call on the rocks to fall upon him, and to the hills to cover him; for if he hath been inflamed with rage at the green tree, what but the work of fiery indignation can be done in the dry?

By the preaching of the gospel, the law may be considered as established in the following manner:

It is established in the hand of a sin-avenging God, against all the ungodliness and unrighteousness of wicked men, as a fiery law: "A fire is kindled in my anger, and shall burn to the lowest hell." (Dent. xxxii. 22.)

It is established in the heart of every enemy to the Saviour, as a witness for God against them, for such are under the curse; and "the curse of God is in the tabernacle of the wicked, and the wrath of God (revealed in the law) abideth on them."

It is a witness for God against all the heathen; the accusing and excusing of their thoughts and conscience show the works of the law written in their hearts.

It is established as magnified and made honourable in the heart of the Mediator, who is both our ark and mercy-seat, which is the law's appointed place, where it is kept so close as never to arrest nor curse any poor penitent sinner who seeks the mercy of God in Christ Jesus, who "is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth."

By the imputation of Christ's righteousness to the believer, and by the love of God shed abroad in his heart, the righteousness of the law is fulfilled in him, and is established in his mind and

conscience, and, as thus fulfilled in him, after the inner man he loves it.

It is established in the hand of God the Father as a most severe rod: "Blessed is the man whom thou chastenest, O Lord, and thou chastenest him out of thy law, that thou mayest give him rest from the days of adversity;" and every such a one "having heard and learned of the Father," says the Saviour, "cometh unto me."

And lastly, it is established by preaching the gospel, in the hand of the Judge of quick and dead, furnishing him with a flaming sword and an iron rod. This sword shall come down on the people of his curse to judgment, and this rod will dash the wicked in pieces like a potter's vessel, when Christ shall appear as a just God and a Saviour,—a just God to the wicked, and a Saviour to the saints, and to be admired in all that believe.

That my reader may be enlightened to see the things which differ, the difference between the law of faith and that of works, between the spirit of liberty and that of bondage, between a minister of the Spirit, who preaches Christ, and is called an Antinomian, and a minister of the letter, who favours Arminianism, and yet is called orthodox; and after trying all things, be enabled to hold fast that which is good, is the prayer and desire of thy faithful friend and willing servant in Christ Jesus,

W. HUNTINGTON.

THE DELUSIONS OF FALSE RELIGION DISCOVERED.

Dear Sirs,—If you will bear with me, I will write a few of the feelings that have passed, from time to time, in my soul, and some little account of the way in which I hope the Lord has led me.

From a child, I seemed to have some kind of fear of God; so that I could not follow sin and wickedness as others, in external acts; and I was obliged to keep away from ungodly characters. Being a teacher in the Church of England school, I was obliged to teach the children the awful lies in their Catechism. Here I continued for some years, attending the church, and passing, in the eyes of many, for a Christian.

I went amongst the Independents a little while, and was a strict hearer there. I was noticed by many of them as a very pious young lad, and a child of God. Thus I heard their preachers, and thought them all dear men of God.

Hearing my mother, who is, I believe, a gracious woman, converse with two of my sisters about the things of God; hearing her tell of her experience, how she had been bound down under the curse of the law for twelve years, expecting nothing but hell; how she had envied the very beasts of the field, because they had no soul to appear before God; how she had gone to bed, many times, afraid to shut her eyes in sleep lest she should awake in hell; and how the Lord had appeared to her, and washed away all her sins, by a blessed manifestation of pardon through the blood and righteousness of Christ

made known to her soul; and hearing, also, a blessed account of the way in which the Lord led some of my sisters, I began to see that I knew nothing about real religion, and that the parson of the parish church bore no marks of a man of God; nor could I find any of the Church people, nor scarcely any among the Independents, or any of their preachers, near me, that could give an account of the real work of grace in their souls.

I afterwards attended a little chapel in the town, though the people who attended it were hated by the mere professors of religion. My mother being a member there, I became a constant hearer. The men who preached there appeared to me to be wonderful men. They preached eternal election, particular redemption, that salvation was all of grace, and that none could be saved but those that were everlastingly chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world. I felt a great pleasure in hearing these men, as they preached doctrinal truths very clearly from the letter of the word, and much of the bright side of the experience of a child of God; and I was often melted down into tears under their preaching.

I now became very zealous for the truth, and could read my Bible from morning till night, and thought that I had a great insight into the truth. I thought that I must be a child of God, because I was such a constant hearer of the word preached, and had, as I thought, such wonderful zeal for God and for his truth, and lived such a good life that no one could bring anything against my character. I continued, for some time, in this state; and passed, in the eyes of some of the children of God, as one that was born of God. I still increased in zeal and head-knowledge, until I thought myself almost fit to stand up in a pulpit.

Soon after this, it pleased the Lord to raise up a faithful servant, and send him amongst us. I heard J. W., a real heart-searching minister. He began to pull down my false hopes and counterfeit religion, and drew a line of distinction, not only between the sheep and the goats, but a searching separation between a Calvinistic sheep and a Calvinistic goat, and opened up the delusions of the day. He said that a man may know all the doctrines of the Bible, and have a wonderful insight into them, so that he may preach and explain them very clearly from the letter of the word, yet never have a spark of grace in his soul; and that whatever a man's religion was, if he had never been brought down under the mighty hand of God, and never had the law of God applied, more or less, with a supernatural power, to his conscience, nor had all his false hopes and false religion burned up and destroyed, nor been brought down a ruined wretch to the feet of Jesus, with groans, sighs, cries, and tears for a manifestation of pardon through the precious atoning blood of Christ made known to his soul by an inward experience, he will be lost to all eternity.

Hearing such things as these, Lord's Day after Lord's Day, for some time, I began to see and feel things very differently to what I ever did before. I saw that I had never stepped one step in the path of life; that I had never possessed one grain of grace in my soul; that I had made lies my refuge, hid myself under false pretences, and



made an agreement with death, and a covenant with hell; that I knew nothing of the law, nor of the gospel; that I had never been killed nor made alive, wounded nor healed, stripped nor clothed, made poor nor made rich; that I had never been brought down nor raised up; that I had a name to live, while my soul was dead before God, dead in sins, dead in a profession, and dead under the curse of God's righteous law, yet knew it not, being blindfolded by the devil, and led captive at his will in a graceless profession. I saw that free will was no more than a spider's web to rest my never-dying soul upon, and that doctrines in the head, without grace, were no better. I saw that all my reading of the Bible and various religious books, all my attendance at places of worship from a child, all my zeal and head-knowledge, and all my prayers, were nothing but a mass of hyypocrisy, deceit, and self-righteousness. I saw that there were thousands in hell that had been as far as I had in a profession of religion, and yet had died under the wrath of God. O how my soul went out after God in sighs, and groans, and wrestlings, and cries, that he would show mercy to such a wretch as I! I saw that the Lord would be just if he cut me off and sent me to hell. And O how my very soul hated hypocrisy and the delusions of my past life! I many times begged the Lord to drag me, in my feelings, through the very belly of hell, rather than let me live and die a hypocrite. O how my soul went out after the Lord in longing desires that he would appear as my God; that he would show mercy unto one so vile; and that he would lead me to Gethsemane, there to see, by precious faith, a slaughtered Jesus, bleeding for my transgressions, and dying that I might live, and that, by his death, I might have everlasting life beyond the grave. O that the Lord would apply these things to my conscience! O for one spark of divine life in my soul! O for one grain of precious faith! O for one drop of atoning blood, and an interest in the justifying righteousness of Christ! I saw that the commandment was exceedingly broad, and that I should soon enter the woful abode of endless night, unless I were saved by the matchless grace of God, and a salvation brought home, applied, and made known to my soul by his mighty power. All my false hopes of heaven, all my fleshly zeal, all my counterfeit faith, and all my head-knowledge of the word of God, appeared to be nothing but delusion; and I felt myself, in some little measure, in my real state, a lost, ruined, perishing sinner, without hope and without help in myself, and a poor, naked, needy, guilty, bankrupt beggar, and that I must for ever lie in hell, under the wrath of a just God, unless I have an experimental knowledge of my eternal election and interest in the person, life, and death of Jesus, so that my soul may not be found naked at the great and awful day.

I feel assured that Christ died for all the elect, and no others; but this will not satisfy my soul. I want a personal knowledge that I am one of the elect brought home to my soul with a living power, that I may know that I am born again of the blessed Spirit, by having his kingdom set up in my heart, so as to feel assured that he is my Lord and my God, and my everlasting portion beyond the grave.

O thou great, unchangeable God, when wilt thou arise and shine into my soul, and bless me with this sweet hope in thy mercy, that I may feel the precious atoning blood of Jesus applied unto me? This is what my soul wants; this is what it longs for.

Sometimes I have felt my soul sweetly drawn out after the Lord, under the preaching of the word, when the servant of the Lord has been led by the blessed Spirit to trace out the feelings of the poor, the outcast, the desolate, the needy, the hopeless, and the helpless in themselves; and I have gone into the fields, under the ricks of corn, and over the hills, to some lonesome downs, where no human eye could see me, nor ear hear me, and poured out my soul unto the Lord, with cries and tears, that he would reveal himself to my soul, and show me his dear hands, and feet, and side, that I might say, with Thomas, "My Lord and my God;" and that he would say unto me, "Thy sins, which are many, are all forgiven." I exclaimed, "This is what I want. Do not be angry; but grant me my petition. O Lord! I feel that I shall be lost for ever, unless I am saved in thee with an everlasting salvation. I deserve not the least of all thy mercies; I deserve nothing but hell; and canst thou, wilt thou have mercy on such a wretch?" Thus I have in tears poured out the feelings of my soul unto the Lord, until my poor body has been wearied with the exercise of my soul; yet I have felt some sweetness in pouring out my soul unto him, and have returned home with a "Who can tell but that the Lord may yet appear, and bless me with the pardon of all my sins?"

No preaching will do for me now, but such as is sound, searching, and experimental, and brought home with power to my soul. Christ in the letter, and a letter religion, will not do for me now. My soul seeks for realities, power, life, and feeling. Salvation felt, handled, and tasted in my soul, is what I long to experience.

Many times have I cried out, in the language of David, "Search me, O God! and try me." I have asked the Lord to see whether I had any evil end in view, and supplicated him to lead me in the way everlasting. I have begged him to bring me to the light, and show unto me my real character and the very ground of my heart, that I might never be resting in a false hope, and never be building on a false foundation; but that I might be sifted and driven out of every refuge of lies, and be brought to the light, that I might have my real state opened to my view as I stand before God. O how I could bless and praise the matchless name of the Lord, that he had not cut me off whilst I was a stranger to him, in an ungodly profession; but that he had, in some little measure, opened my eyes to see, and my heart to feel the awful state in which I was!

Since I have felt these things, a secret hope sometimes rises up in my mind, that had the blessed Lord meant to destroy me, he would not have shown me those things; that he would not have implanted his fear in my soul, (as I hope he has,) nor have brought me to see and feel all my righteousness, all my good works and all my bad works, to be as filthy rags; and that he would not have caused me to groan, and pant, and long, and sigh for the precious imputed righteousness.

ness and atoning blood of Jesus to be applied to my soul. I have seen that all real religion was supernatural, and came from God, and from God alone; and that unless I had this real, vital religion brought with supernatural power into my conscience, and experimentally enjoyed the pardon of all my sins, by an internal manifestation of the precious blood and righteousness of Christ by the Holy Spirit, I rested in a refuge of lies. O how my soul did long and pant after these things to be experimentally felt in my soul! What desire I have felt towards the blessed Redeemer! I have felt that I could leave father and mother, house and land, gold and silver, anything and everything that this world calls good or great; I felt that I could leave all for Christ's sake, and die for his honour and glory, would he but manifest himself to me.

Some times, on a Lord's Day, the faithful servant of the Lord has entered into the feelings of my soul in such a manner that I have been constrained to bless and praise the name of the Lord for sending such a one amongst us; one whose face was set as a flint, and who stood as an iron pillar and as a brazen wall against the deceitful religion of the day; one that had been led into the everlasting distinction between the elect and the reprobate; one that separated the precious from the vile, cast up the highway, and lifted up a standard to the people; one that had been experimentally led into the footsteps of the flock, and experimentally traced out the experience of gracious souls; and one that had been led into the deep things of God and deep soul-trouble, that he might find out the poor dear children of God, and speak of the path as he experimentally passed through it. While he was speaking from these words, "For in a time accepted have I heard thee, and in a day of salvation have I succoured thee. Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation," O the wonderful things that he was enabled to bring out of them, as the mouth of God to my soul! As soon as he began to preach, the words dropped into my soul, melted my hard heart, crumbled me into nothing, and laid me in the dust; all my fears were gone, and a sweet hope sprang up in my soul. O the beauty, power, life, and feeling that seemed to clothe the words which dropped from his lips! What union I felt to the dear faithful servant of the Lord! My soul was, as it were, melted with love to the ever-blessed Jehovah, and to the minister as his servant. I felt a sweet calm in my soul for some time. How worthless were the things of this world to me! I felt that I could leave it and ten thousand other worlds for the name and sake of a precious Christ. But these feelings did not last long; and

"I to my own sad state return;"*

yet I sometimes felt encouragement under the ministry of the word, and sweet nearness to the Lord in my daily walks, and whilst working in the fields.

My eyes were now opened more clearly to see the errors of the Church of England and the dissenters generally. The minister of the parish church had been taken away by an almost sudden death, and, to all outward appearances, sudden destruction to his soul. It

evidently appeared that the devil had raised up a Pope, and sent him in his place, to do his best to lead hundreds blindfolded down with himself into hell. I saw that the Church of England was nothing but a false, unscriptural, formal, corrupt, worldly, counterfeit church, and bore no more marks and evidences of the true, scriptural church of Christ, than Dagon of old did of the ever-blessed Jehovah; and it is my firm belief that there is not one in a hundred of her ministers, nor one in a thousand of her members, who is not dead in trespasses and sins; and if they die in their present state of malice and hatred against the truth of God, hell will be their portion for ever and ever. And when I took a view of the Ranters, Wesleyans, Independents, and General Baptists, I was led to conclude that they were scarcely one whit better than the Church of England.

O! with what weight have these things lain, at times, on my mind, when I have looked around me, and have seen flocks of goats, wolves, and hypocrites, flocking backwards and forwards to and from the Popish churches and chapels, with merry and cheerful countenances! I cannot describe with my pen what I have often felt for them. They have caused me many gloomy moments. I felt assured that all the elect of God would be brought out from amongst them, and be saved in the Lord, with an everlasting salvation, before they close their eyes in death; but when I have heard of professor after professor dropping out of time into eternity, without the least shadow of a true gospel hope, I have had many searchings of heart, and humblings of soul, and cries unto the Lord that he would lead me and guide me into that blessed path that leads to the kingdom of God.

But, to conclude. There is still wanting in my soul the eternal witness of the blessed Spirit witnessing to my spirit the full assurance of the pardon of my sins, so as to give me full satisfaction. This is what I have long sought after with many cries and tears unto the Lord; but I find that by all my wrestlings, strugglings, and cries, I cannot put myself amongst the manifested children of God; for I have no power, nor might, nor spiritual strength of my own. "I am a worm, and no man;" a poor, vile, hell-deserving wretch, and daily feel the evil workings of my base heart, and the awful abominations which are done in the land of my soul.

Farewell, my dearly-beloved friends.

Wilts, May 17, 1843.

A LOVER OF THE TRUTH.

"DENY ME NOT THE REQUEST OF MY LIPS."

My dear Brother and Sister,—I had almost come to the conclusion to write no more about the solemn things of God, having such a deep feeling sense of my ignorance, darkness, and helplessness, which have so far prevailed that I have not been able to answer the two letters I received previous to yours. Common courtesy between man and man demands an answer, but I assure you, my dear brother, that I need something more than common civility to induce me to write.

I will now endeavour, by the help of God, in simplicity and sincerity, to inform you whereabouts I am now in feeling. If brought to mind, you must be aware that I have given you many hints concerning my experience coming short of many of the Lord's dear children whom I have heard speak or read their testimony of believing, as Hart says, in Christ. I have felt myself left behind them, and durst not, having a tender conscience, presumptuously rush after them; which feeling of coming short, I assure you, my brother, very much increases on me. The more I search the word of God the more do I see and feel my need of it and the blessedness connected therewith. I recollect that when the doctrine of election was first opened to my mind, and I was led, like the noble Bereans of old, to search the Scriptures, how astonished I was to find it set forth throughout the whole of that blessed book, and I wondered that I did not discover it before. The word of the Lord seemed to me to shine and blaze with the solemn truth of predestination, and so doth it now concerning the solemn sealing of God the Holy Ghost. I find that the patriarchs, kings, apostles, and prophets were favoured with it; and in reading the writings of gracious men, both dead and living, I find Huntington had it, so had James Barry, Joseph Hart, and others, which caused hope to spring up in my soul that the vision would, in the Lord's own time, speak to such a money wretch as I. May the blessed God give me strength and patience to wait upon him, and keep back my soul from presumptuous sins. My mind being exercised with this important and solemn matter, I feel where I myself am, and see clearly where many more of the Lord's children are. Destitute in soul-experience of this solemn sealing, I cannot but think that the apparent ease and contentment without it arises, first, from God's sovereignty in withholding from them light and life to see and feel their need of it, and, secondly, from the lukewarm state of many ministers who do not appear to me to be led very earnestly to contend for it. In the experience brought forth there appears to be, if I may so call it, a general want of clearness, decision, and weight, and I have felt myself after hearing it to be left in a sort of undecided state. Some things appeared in my favour and other things against me, so that I could not tell whereabouts I was, and I cannot but think that the cause of so many dead empty professors hanging about the church of Christ is owing to the want of a more clear and searching ministry in the present day. I do think that if those who stand up in the name of the Lord were led more strenuously to insist upon the new birth, and more earnestly to contend for living vital faith and felt union to the Lord Jesus Christ, the blessed gift of God the Father, to redeem and save to the uttermost poor feelingly lost sinners, it would have the effect which it had when the blessed Lord was upon earth, and from that day many of his professed disciples walked no more with him. The sayings of the Lord were too hard for them.

I hope, if I do err in these things, my brother will bear with me, for I do assure him I have written out of the abundance of my heart, with no intention to make sad the heart of any one without cause,

but how am I to account for the general death, barrenness, worldliness, lightness, covetousness, hypocrisy, carnal ease, and security which prevails in the church but from the secondary cause of that apparent and, by me felt want of life, power, and unction in the ministry of God's word. What a solemn, weighty, and important office is the office of a minister of Christ! How can any man take this office upon himself unless he be called of God, as was Aaron? My poor soul trembles at the thought. I would rather be dumb the rest of my life than be hurried into rash and awful error; to run unsent of God. Satisfied I am that none can minister acceptably in holy things but such as are influenced by felt truth, felt love, and the felt seeking and obtainment of God's approbation.

These things have I written to you because I love you, and may God bless you with more faith, love, and patience, and also bless your dear wife with felt salvation. I should have felt pleasure in telling you about the sealing of the blessed God, but I have it not, therefore dare not lie. I have the witness of the Spirit in my soul that I am a sinful wretch deserving hell, and likewise that none but the Christ of God can save me. I am also blessed with hope in him, for which I feel grateful, but I want sealing.

Wrestle for me if thou canst, and write as soon as the Lord shall help you.

That God in mercy may visit a poor worm with felt redemption is the prayer of thy poor brother,

F—, March 5, 1843.

R. D.

THE BLESSEDNESS OF AN EVERLASTING COVENANT.

My dear Friends in the Lord Jesus Christ,—I received yours, and the moment I read it I felt for you, and said, "How true it is that in the world we must have tribulation; but how indescribably blessed it is that in Christ we have peace!" Bless his precious name, peace with God, peace of conscience by faith in his blood and love. Here we have all things and abound, "for he that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?" Yes, my dear friends, though the world seems to frown, remember, this is not your rest; and be assured, "all things are yours, for ye are Christ's, and Christ is God's." The Lord enable you to remember, and sweetly and feelingly to sing David's song: "Although my house be not so with God, yet he hath made with me an everlasting covenant, *ordered in all things and sure*; for this is all my salvation and all my desire, although he make it not to grow." "Be not so with God!" How? Why, although neither my outward circumstances nor my inward feelings be as the light of the morning, when the sun riseth, even a morning without clouds; nor as the tender grass, springing out of the earth by clear shining after rain; though everything appear to be the reverse of this, nevertheless, covenant mercies stand sure, for ever sure, and must and shall be enjoyed in due course, as ordered by infinite wisdom. O the

matchless wonders of God's boundless grace! May my dear friends be filled with them in this their day of trouble. Blessed Spirit, fill them with thy sweet unction, and bathe them in the dear Redeemer's blood and love.

"Trials may press of every sort;
They may be sore—they *must* be short.
We now believe, but soon shall view
The greatest glories God can show."

My prayer is, that the Lord will preserve you in his fear, and keep you from taking any wrong step, and that you may be enabled to keep the Lord in view in all that you do, think, or say; and sure I am that in the end you will find all work together for good. May the Lord the Spirit seal upon your hearts the sweet and solemn song of Habakkuk: "Although the fig tree shall not blossom, neither shall fruit be in the vines; the labour of the olive shall fail, and the fields shall yield no meat; the flocks shall be cut off from the fold, and there shall be no herd in the stalls; yet I will rejoice in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my salvation. The Lord God is my strength, and he will make my feet like hinds' feet, and he will make me to walk upon mine high places." (See also Micah vii. 8—10.) I do assure you that I feel for you, and I hope the Lord will both direct and support you. I have always found that real faith must be tried, and sometimes as by fire. Real faith has the most work to do in hot fires and deep waters, and she can very often see the clearest in dark nights, and stand the firmest and fight the most courageously in the greatest dangers. When sense and reason fail, faith has to believe in hope against hope, but in the end she is sure to shout victory. Real faith is sure to sicken in the sunshine of common sense and reason, for it is an atmosphere in which she cannot well thrive. My dear friends, read the 11th chapter of the Hebrews, and take a survey of the family to which you belong, and may God enable you to take courage, and bless you with the same faith in lively exercise; and then I am sure that tribulation will work patience.

I shall be very glad to hear from you soon, that I may know how you are in all respects. And that the Lord may bless you with his sweet presence, and enable you to rest and confide in him, is the prayer of, yours in the Lord,

Manchester, February 7, 1832.

W. G.

"THE VOICE OF THE BELOVED."

Dear Sister in the glorious Head of the Church,—Yours came to hand; and though I felt sorry at the distress you have of late experienced, I was glad to find that the Lord supported your mind in the midst of all. Afflictions of various kinds are one part of the lot of the heirs of promise while in this vale of tears, yet covenant love is inscribed upon them all. It is true we cannot always see nor feel this to be the case, and therefore often fret and rebel, and think we are dealt very hardly with; but when the glorious light of life shines

upon our path, and the unerring Teacher sweetly teaches us the will and design of our adorable Lord in these trying dispensations, we then in holy wonder and solemn joy say, "He hath done all things well;" nor do we wish for one trial less, for the sweet presence of Jesus sweetens all. There are solemn and blessed moments, when faith can say, "It is the voice of my Beloved. Behold, he cometh leaping upon the mountains, skipping upon the hills;" when, in glorious power, he speaks to our soul, and says, "Rise up, my love, my fair one, and come away." "Rise up, my dear loving and lovely spouse, from all thy corroding care, from all thy guilt, and filth, and legal fear; bear upon the arm of my love, and view thyself as washed, in my blood and clothed in my righteousness, as one in and with me, bone of my bone, body of my body, flesh of my flesh, and life of my life. Come away from all thy earnest cares, and from every thing that distresses thy soul, and come up into the blessed enjoyment of what I am unto thee, and what I have done for thee, and what thou art and ever shalt be in me; have nothing to do with thyself, but lose thyself in me, for thou art not thy own, but my purchase, my bride, yea, my portion and my fulness." My dear sister, when our ever-to-be-adored Lord brings us, for a few moments, into this sweet experience, we are obliged to exclaim, "Whom have I in heaven but thee?" It is, in very deed, spring with our souls; the turtle is heard in our land; and this causes all the birds in the soul to sing. We then know what it is to have joy and peace in believing. There is that sweet interest between Christ and us, that we charge all, within and without, not to stir our Beloved till he please. Here we feel a little of the power and glory of vital godliness, and we are quite willing to let the body of professors have all the glory of all their fleshly exploits; and the feeling of our soul is, "My Beloved is mine, and I am his; he feedeth among the lilies;" and here we feed too, and here we wish to stay, and wonder, and gaze, and love, and feed till we die. But O what a painful pull-back it is when the dear Lord withdraws his presence, and we, as it were, drop into the world again! Well; Jesus is the same, and he will come again, and by and by he will fetch us home, where we shall be for ever with him, and for ever like him. Thanks be to God for his unspeakable gift.

I am glad to hear that the Lord has appeared so kindly for some branches of your family, and I hope you will both see and feel that all is well in every respect.

That the Lord may be with and bless you, is the prayer of, yours in the Lord,

Manchester, April 3, 1833.

W. G.

THE UNPARDONABLE SIN.

Messrs. Editors,—Perceiving from your invaluable publication that you have many correspondents who are among the tried and tempted followers of the Lamb, and having a good hope through grace, and through grace alone, that I am one of them, although

I suffer hard and bitter persecution from Satan and my own corrupt nature, the working of which, at times, is so strong, that I am almost driven to distraction, but I bless God Jacob shall conquer Esau, though the conflict last long; I say, this being my case, I am desirous of writing to you upon a subject which has for some time occupied my thoughts, and which, I fear, many of the weak and timid ones of God's family are sorely and grievously troubled about, namely, the sin against the Holy Ghost.

I heard of that dear servant of Jesus Christ, Mr. W., being at Gower-street Chapel, and I went to hear him, when, to my great joy, he mentioned the very subject that I had for some time longed to hear spoken of, as I had been under an awful dread that I had committed the unpardonable sin. When he spoke of his experiencing the very same feelings that had so troubled and harassed my mind, I could almost have eaten his words, and could scarcely hold my peace in the chapel. He described his having to put his hand over his mouth to prevent the most dreadful blasphemies coming out, which I have experienced myself; but, blessed be God, I now feel that those sins are Satan's own, which he tries to put into the heart of the poor troubled, trembling child of God, to drive him to despair; for, as Mr. W. said, the sinner, or rather the saved sinner, would have no fear about that deadly sin if he had committed it. I thought of telling Mr. W. that I believed he had come ninety-nine miles to preach to my soul.

It is now upwards of two years since I was first taught to cry for mercy, and during that time I have suffered much by the conflict between the two natures; but I am now convinced that I must wait God's time for deliverance, as I feel that nothing but a precious Christ will satisfy me, now that God has given the appetite; and bless his holy name for that. But I will not take up your valuable space by writing a long letter about the troubles and trials, ups and downs, hopes and fears which I am daily the subject of, but will conclude by saying that your publication appears to just suit my present spiritual condition, as would also dear Mr. W.'s preaching suit the Satan-hunted and harassed ones of the flock of Christ, who are dear to God as the apple of his eye; but of this we can be assured only by the mighty power of God the eternal Spirit.

That the Lord may bless you abundantly is the wish of the poor worm now addressing you.

London, Nov. 10, 1842.

C. B.

"I LOOKED FOR HELL, HE BROUGHT ME HEAVEN."

Messrs. Editors,—When young, my parents sent me to a Wesleyan Sunday School, which kept me perhaps from running into such lengths of profanity and sin, outwardly, as many young persons do. When I was about twelve years of age, I believe I had some strong convictions that I was a sinner, whether natural or not I leave you

to judge, and began to say my prayers very devoutly, as I thought, for several months together. However, this wore off, and I indulged myself in sin to a great extent. About this time I had several awful dreams, which took such an effect upon my mind that I was often afraid to lay myself down to rest, for fear some infernal spirit should take me away.

About three years ago my mind was in such a dreadfully distressed state that I was often tempted to destroy myself; and have wandered about in the fields, meditating which would be the best method to put my design into execution; but hitherto the Lord hath prevented me, and to him be all the praise. A short time after this strong temptation had subsided, I had a great desire to hear some of the Lord's sent ministers who preach the truth in sincerity. It was some time before I had my wish gratified, as I knew of none nearer than L—, which was ten miles from where I lived. However, in the latter part of the year 1841 I was at L—, and heard the truths of the everlasting gospel preached. I was condemned under the word, for it cut me to the very quick, but the time to favour Zion was not yet come, yet I felt a faint hope spring up in my breast that I should one day see the salvation of God.

In October, 1842, it pleased Him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will to lay his afflicting hand upon me. I was seized with a fever, and after being ill for a few days, I felt a solemn frame of mind coming over me, and the words, "Be still, and know that I am God," were impressed on my mind with power. On the night of October 18th I believe I began to see my real state as a sinner; the wrath of Almighty God in a holy law, which my conscience accused me of breaking in thousands of instances, was revealed; the sins of my former life were powerfully set before my eyes, and Satan suggested to my mind that it was all over with me now, and that I should soon be with him. Like Job, I was full of tossings to and fro, until the dawning of the day, and the next day passed in much the same despairing state of mind. But, blessed be the God of all grace, he did not leave my poor soul a prey to the enemy, but, towards the evening, he put a cry into my heart for mercy and deliverance, yea, "I cried, by reason of my affliction, unto the Lord, and he heard me," and these words came with mighty power, "I, even I, am he that blotteth out thy transgressions, for mine own sake, and will not remember thy sins." The blessed change the words produced, through the operation of the eternal Spirit, on my mind is indescribable. When these soul-comforting words were first darted into my mind I was at a loss to account for them, or where they sprang from, for I could not believe that the Lord could, consistently with his holiness, save such a hell-deserving wretch as I felt myself to be. I, a poor worm, was looking for hell, but, honours crown his brow, he brought me heaven. These words kept running in my mind over and over again; and, as I could not for my life get rid of them, they began to inspire my mind with hope. The blessed Spirit had begun the work, and he carried it on in spite of all my unbelieving fears, and, I trust, imparted divine faith to

my soul. I saw, by the eye of faith, the Friend of Sinners on the cross, crucified for *me*, even for poor unworthy *me*. O! the blessed sight melted my heart to tenderness, and tears of godly sorrow and contrition trickled down my face. I was so ill in body that I could scarcely sit up in bed, yet my soul was drawn out in praise and adoration to my dear Redeemer for his love to my poor soul, which love was stronger than death. "Bless the Lord, O my soul! and all that is within me bless his holy name! Bless the Lord, O my soul! and forget not all his benefits!" O that I may be often led to Calvary, and lay my poor soul at the feet of Jesus, and feel his love and blood flow into my heart, as I did at that happy period. However, I was very much tried by the tempter the next night, who, in his hellish spleen and malice, endeavoured to persuade me that what I had experienced the night before was all delusion, but when the enemy came in like a flood, the Spirit of the Lord lifted up a standard against him, and my soul was again led to rejoice in the Lord.

My paper is about full, and I dare say you are tired of this scrawl. Suffice it to say that I lost, in a few weeks after my deliverance, much of the unction of it from my mind, and have been much in the dark, especially of late; sometimes, indeed, I have been ready to give up all hope, but, blessed be God, he has not left me without a witness, and has lifted the beggar from the dunghill, and caused me to love and praise his holy name.

I will just add that the rumour of my deliverance from bondage spread amongst some professors, and I was soon attacked by one of them about my principles, which they called damnable doctrines; and one of them who was very zealous for their cause told my wife that I should soon lose my religion, if I persevered in the opinions which I then held. They also invited me to join the Arminian camp. As for losing my religion, I have no goodness, piety, or personal holiness of my own to lose, but what I am, I am by sovereign, unmerited, yea, unlooked-for grace. I have not produced my religion by either free will or free agency, but I trust, and am persuaded, that the Lord will keep that which is committed to him till the last day.

That the Lord may bless you, and make you a blessing, is the prayer of,

Leicestershire, July 14th, 1843.

SEEK-TRUTH.

HEART GREETINGS.

Dear Brother,—I feel grace, mercy, and love enough in my heart to believe I am the Lord's, and such a re-kindling of love to you and the dear friends whom I visited, that I can in truth greet them with pure affection. Their great kindness to such a poor worm moves my heart with gratitude, and makes me cry, "Dear Lord, bless them in their souls with a sweet, lively hope in thy mercy, and let them know more deeply how great thy love is towards them, and may their poor, troubled hearts be oftentimes melted by thy compassion and tender mercy." Whilst I was with you, my poor soul

experienced great and sudden changes. I was, at times, sweetly overcome with the persuasion of my interest in the eternal love of God in Christ towards me, which persuasion was blessedly confirmed by the word of the Lord dwelling richly in me in my infirmities. I also found sweet access to a throne of grace, so that I was enabled to pour out my heart before the Lord, and felt him to be a sure refuge for me. The morning text at chapel bowed my poor soul down before the Lord with sweet submission and felt contrition, and, notwithstanding all my base conduct, I could not help believing that God loved me. But, in the forenoon of the day I left, a little before dinner time, such darkness and bondage fell upon me, that my smiles and conversation were both forced. I concealed it as much as I possibly could, but I could not get above it, it followed me to my home, and my poor heart was ready to break with sorrow, and my soul melted within me because of heaviness. I was, however, favoured with mercy on my journey, and arrived safely at home by seven o'clock, very much bowed down in my soul. I found my father very weak and ill, and my brother's circumstances painfully oppressive. Under these circumstances, I sat in silence, turning over one thing after another in my mind, and feeling it to be a day of adversity with me. I vented my trouble as well as I could at a throne of grace, and felt a little softened and encouraged by these words flowing into my mind,

When troubles, like a gloomy cloud,
Have gathered thick, and thundered loud,
He near my soul has always stood;
His loving-kindness, O how good!

I was then led to look back, and as past matters came into my mind, I was enabled to see and feel that the reason I had not been swallowed up was, that the grace of God had been sufficient for me, and his strength had been made perfect in weakness; though "troubled on every side, yet not distressed; perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed;" bless the dear name of the Lord, saith my soul, for past kindness and present mercies, my hope is still in him. Therefore, "Why art thou cast down, O my soul, and why art thou disquieted within me? Hope thou in God, for I shall yet praise him, who is the health of my countenance and my God." Sometimes, when I hear or read the accounts which the Lord's children give of their sins, they appear trifling in comparison to mine; for there is such a peculiar internal feeling in my soul respecting my sins, that I seem to be, and feel to be, the chief of sinners. And then again, when I hear or read of the sweet, conspicuous, and powerful deliverances of some of the Lord's family, my soul sinks within me; for theirs appear so great, and mine so small, that I feel that I am less than the least of all saints. But I am convinced that I cannot add one cubit to my stature in spiritual things, and that what I want is power given me to think soberly according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith, for the least measure

is saving. And what a mercy it is for my poor soul that I have such a measure of faith in God as to make me tremble and cry for deliverance from felt deserved wrath; such a measure of faith in Christ as to cause me to fly to him as the only Refuge set before me in the gospel; and such a measure of faith as to be enabled at times not only to hope, but to feel that I am an heir of salvation, by the strong consolations that I experience. Ah, my brother, it is all well with us; tempest tossed we may be, but not lost; cast down, but not destroyed. And may the Lord help us to endure hardness as good soldiers, to be strong and quit ourselves like men, and, by precious faith, may we go to Christ, and possess, in soul feeling, the promised land. Bless his dear name, the promise is sure to all the seed, the weak as well as the strong; the battle is the Lord's, therefore final victory is certain. May soul-felt victory be shouted by us, to the glory of God, the comfort of our souls, and the confusion of our enemies; and may we sweetly experience what it is to rest in God, casting all our care upon him, knowing that he careth for us; and in everything may we be enabled to make known our requests by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving.

Give my love to your wife, and when you see Mr. — and our sisters in the Lord, tender my kind love to them. And may the Lord unite us to each other in himself, in that sweet measure that our charity may be fervent; and may your souls be sweetly watered, your consciences kept tender, and your spirits weighty with the things of God; and may the Lord give you to feel his dear presence in his house, that it may prove a Bethel to you, and, if it be his will, a birth-place to others.

My kind love to thee, brother; and may your heart, and the hearts of all the Lord's people, be united to fear his name, for Christ's sake. Amen and amen.—Thine in truth.

May 24, 1843.

THE EXCEEDING GREATNESS OF THE POWER OF GOD IN THE SOUL OF SARAH WIGHT.

(Continued from page 283.)

From Saturday, March 27, 1647, to the 19th of May following, fifty-three days in succession, she partook of no sustenance whatever, with the exception of three or four cups of water at a time, and once a little broth, which she cast up immediately, and yet she looked better than she did seven or eight weeks before. She now craved a little water, saying, "Christ hath given you freely; when he turned water into wine, he turned not cups or glasses full, but whole firkins full." She then drank three or four cups full of water, after which she said, "As I live, saith the Lord, I will not the death of a sinner. He hath sworn that he delights not in the death of a sinner. He hath said, 'I will never leave thee nor forsake thee.' What am I but a poor, wretched, empty, disconsolate, sinful, vain, contemptible worm, fit only to tread upon? yet hath

Jesus Christ loved me. But that which I admire most is that He should die for such a one." Having kept her bed ever since the 6th of April, she had become very sore and weary, and, turning herself in bed, she said, "Now I have my desire; I desired nothing but a crucified, and I have a crucified Christ. I am sore all over, and can neither hear nor see. I desired Him so, and I have Him so, and nothing else. We should be as willing to bear the cross of Christ as to wear his crown, for he was made perfect by suffering, and yet he had no sin; it was for us he suffered, and therefore we should be content to bear the cross. Ah! had I known this, I should not have been in so sad a condition as I was; but God's time is the best time to reveal himself, and to open my eyes to see and my ears to hear; and he gives me power to wait. Was I afraid to name the devil? Why, it was nothing but free grace that made the difference between me and the devil. All is free! mercy free, goodness free, and love free. When the Lord proclaimed his name, he called himself merciful, gracious, and long-suffering. God has two thrones; one is in the highest heavens, and the other is in the lowest hearts, and he dwells as truly in the lowest hearts as in the highest heavens. When Solomon had built his temple, he said, 'The heaven of heavens cannot contain thee, how much less this house that I have built?' But God builds himself a house to dwell in, and he dwells in it for ever. Happy is that people whose God is the Lord, whose joy is their strength."

In the morning of April 15th she said, "Daniel in the lions' den—the three children in the fiery furnace—God delivered them, and so he doth me." Having drunk some water, she said, "Have I not a mother? Pray entreat her to pardon my murmurings against her, for nothing else troubles me. God hath pardoned me. And hath the Creator pardoned, and shall not the creature?" Then, weeping much, she continued, "When the prodigal returned, his earthly father pardoned him and his heavenly Father pardoned him; and will not my mother pardon me? If they who murmur against God and against an earthly parent felt for it what I have felt, they would never do it. Nothing lies heavier upon my mind than my murmurings and disobedience towards my mother." She then desired that her mother would come and testify that she had pardoned her, though at this time she could neither see nor hear. Her mother came, and took her hand, and put it upon her neck, whereon she had a scarf. The daughter, knowing her, cast her head into her mother's bosom, and, weeping, kissed her and stroked her face, saying, "I know you, mother; and I love you with another love, which differs from that with which I loved you before." She then asked to have her eyes washed, and prayed that she might see her mother, and hear her tell her that she had pardoned her disobedience. This was done. She opened her eyes, and saw her mother; and immediately her ears were opened also, and she heard her mother testifying that she had pardoned her and loved her as her own soul; whereupon, her heart was at rest, and she was well satisfied. After half an hour, her hearing was again taken from

her, and her eyes were closed. Some time after, she remarked, "Jesus said, 'The cup which my heavenly Father gives me to drink, shall I not drink it?' He drank the dregs; and shall the saints think it too much to sip of the cup? The yoke of Christ is easy, and his burden is light; but the yoke of sin is heavy, and wrath is heavy. The yoke of Christ is easy, because he helps them to bear it. The saints would have no sufferings, if it were not for their good. Christ comes leaping over the mountains, and skipping over the hills. There is nothing in the soul but mountains of sin and hills of corruption. Christ comes, not walking, nor running, but leaping and skipping to a poor bewildered soul; not to a garden ready trimmed, but he trims it himself, to abide in it for ever. 'If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us.' He will give water of life to them that thirst; not water only, but water of life. He hides himself that we may seek the more diligently after him, and that he may reveal himself more fully. I that was an enemy of God am an heir with Christ, to live in glory for ever and ever. Christ is my brother, my elder brother. How sweet are the teachings of the Spirit to my soul! sweeter than the teachings of men or angels, which speak much to the ear, (and that is well,) but cannot say to my soul, 'Thy sins are pardoned, and Christ loves thee.'"

On April 17th, having drunk some water, she said, "We love Christ because he loved us first; we rejoice in him because he rejoiced in us first; and we desire him because he desired us first. I once could not believe that I should be saved; but now, if men or devils stood before me, and should tell me that I should not be saved, I would not believe them. I see Him that is invisible; and I look on Him whom I have pierced, and mourn over him. Do you not see him? If you saw him as I see him, you would admire him. A sight of him would satisfy all nations." Being importuned to take some food, she said, "I cannot. I have what I did desire; I have a crucified Christ; I am filled with heavenly manna. I am sore from the crown of the head to the sole of the foot; but, let the Lord do what he will with me; let him take me to his eternal rest, I am content; or, if he continue me in this vale of misery, I am content. Thou, Lord, art a free agent; thou workest when thou wilt and where thou wilt. Let the Lord do with me what he will, I am content; if he threw me into hell, I should be content, because I have deserved it. But his mercy will save me in the day of wrath. God hath not forgotten to be gracious and merciful, though I have often said that he had."

On the 19th of April, after drinking some lime water, she said, "God is a refuge and a shield from the storms and the tempests. He hath avenged me on mine adversary the devil, who thought to be avenged on me; and I thought the same; but the Lord hath avenged me on him. Shall the unrighteous judge do justly in avenging the widow, and shall not the Righteous Judge do justly? Yea, a thousand times more. Happy are the people that have the God of Jacob for their excellency, and whose strength is in

the Lord. Behold, the Lord will come with a strong hand. He shall feed the flock; he shall carry the lambs in his arms. Thou, Lord, art worth the waiting for; if one should wait from the day of one's birth till the day of one's death, even one glimpse of thee is worth all this waiting. Let him that walks in darkness, and sees no light, trust in the name of the Lord, and stay himself upon his God." She had not eaten anything during the last twenty-four days, nor drunk anything but a little water. Food being offered to her, she remarked, "Do you think that I do not eat? How do you think I live? No eye of man sees my food; but God sees it. None could taste the sweetness of the manna by looking on it, but by eating it. The redeemed of the Lord are a royal priesthood and a chosen generation. 'He hath made us kings and priests unto God,' more precious than gold, than the gold of Ophir. The Lord hath avenged me of mine enemy, that roared over me, night and day, to devour me. They, Lord, that know thy name, will trust in thee, because thou never failest them that seek thee. Before I called, the Lord answered; and while I was asking, he heard, and delivered me from all my fears." A while after, several persons who much wished to hear her speak, came into the room. Her ears were opened; and she lay with a linen cloth over her eyes, which were very weak. She said, "O magnify the Lord with me; for he hath delivered me from all my fears; not from one, but from all! He hath regarded the low estate of his handmaid. I rejoice in him. I mourn over Him whom I have pierced. It was not Judas, nor the soldiers, so much as I, that pierced him. I thought that I was the bad thief; but he hath said to me, 'Thou shalt be with me in Paradise.' The earthly Paradise was a type of the heavenly Paradise. That was fading and lost; but this endures for ever. O praise the Lord with me! for he hath heard me and looked upon me, the vilest, the worst, and the chiefest of sinners; one that was rebellious, disobedient, unthankful, and unholy; a murmurer as much as were the Israelites in the wilderness." Here she wept abundantly, and then continued, "And their murmuring kept them out of Canaan. But though I have murmured, he hath saved me. I was at the pit's very brink, at the very brink of hell, and the Lord brought me from it; and is not he worthy of praise? Neither men nor angels could open these brazen gates, this iron door, this hard heart, of mine; none but he could do it. When I confessed my sins, he forgave me the punishment. I could never confess my sins till he had made known his mercy to me, though I sought diligently to do it. Nothing but the feeling sense of his mercy could ever bring me to confess my sins with meltings. I would fain have got comfort from mine own workings, or from a creature. I spake to men; but I could never get comfort till the Lord himself brought it. I could not love him till he made known his love to me, the chiefest of sinners. If all the sins of the world were in one, I thought that it would be nothing to mine. I could not find any, in all the Scriptures, who obtained mercy in such a case as mine; yet he hath shown mercy

to me. If all the world had told me, a short time ago, that Christ died for me, and that my sins were pardoned, I could not have credited it; but now, if all men, angels, and devils, should tell me that my sins are not forgiven, I would not believe them. What pains did I take in going to men, to hear them speak comfort to me, and they could not do it; but Christ did it in a moment. They that know his name will trust in him; they cannot but trust in him. If the world knew him, they could not but love him. He is the chiefest of ten thousand; he is more to be desired in his lowest estate than millions of worlds. Behold, O daughter of Jerusalem! thy King comes meekly, that he might teach his people meekness. He came on an ass's colt, not on a horse finely trimmed, to an unlearned heifer unaccustomed to the yoke; to me, who was ungodly and unprepared, a wild ass's colt. Surely after I was turned I repented. I could not turn to him, nor love him, till he showed love to me, and turned me. Praise the Lord with me, that hath shown mercy to one who was in so desperate a case as I was in. I could see nothing before me but curses, hell, and wrath, night and day. O that others may hear what God hath done for such a one! I wish that none may despair of the mercy of God, who hath done so much for me." A person having given her a nosegay, she looked on it, and, smelling it, said, "The flowers are all fragrant, but some are more fragrant than others; they have different colours and different smells, and yet all come out of the earth: so are the saints all in Christ; and in him they are all sweet and savoury, but are of different strength and judgments. The strong should bear with the weak, and not despise them."

(To be continued.)

EDITORS' REVIEW.

The Lawful Captive Delivered. By James Osbourn, Minister of the Gospel in the City of Baltimore. Baltimore, 1835.

We are so intimately connected with the United States of America by the ties of blood, institutions, language, and commerce, that her welfare or the reverse must ever deeply interest us. And if this be so temporally, professing, and feeling, too, we trust, an interest in the spiritual welfare of the church of Christ, any authentic account of the state of vital religion in America must deeply interest us. It was this feeling which induced us lately to insert what we considered a very faithful and experimental letter by a Mr. James Osbourn to a professing character in New York; and our present number contains part of a New Year's Meditation from the same pen. Since then we have received from America a packet of books written by the same author; and we embrace an early opportunity of bringing them before our readers. We have a list of thirteen publications from his pen, the most interesting of which we have placed at the head of the present article; it being a memoir of his life and experience. From it we learn that

Mr. Osbourn is not a native of the United States, but by birth an Englishman, who emigrated in the year 1805.

But we proceed to make some extracts from his memoir:

"I was born in the month of October, 1780, in the parish of Dunsfold, in the county of Surrey. My parents had fourteen children born to them, seven sons and seven daughters, and all but one lived to be men and women; and of the whole number I was the last. My parents were of the High Church, and I was trained up in all the outward rites and ceremonies of that national Establishment; and going to church once on a Sunday, and sometimes reading a few portions out of the Common Prayer Book, was nearly or quite all the religion I saw among those people for the first seventeen years of my natural life. As for a change of heart by the grace of God, or the Spirit of the Lord quickening a dead sinner and enlightening his mind to see his lost and ruined state before God, and of receiving pardon, and peace, and Christ Jesus, and being made to rejoice in hope of the glory of God, I heard nothing from the pulpit or any other quarter; nor have I any good reason to think that there was a person in all the parish that knew or understood any of these matters, or that was acquainted even with the letter of divine truth, to say nothing about the teaching of the Holy Spirit."

During these years he gives an account of many natural convictions, all of which, however, only ended in the flesh, and in spite of which he plunged deeper and deeper into sin. Of his first awakening he gives the following account:

"In the parish adjoining the one in which I was born and raised, resided a clergyman of the High Church, by the name of Flockton, and a vague, loose man he was, and much given to sport and revelry, but held in high estimation by his parishioners, as a man lively and sportive out of the pulpit, and a very good preacher in it, and thus they considered themselves well suited every way.

"But blind and ignorant of spiritual things as Mr. Flockton was in the first part of his ministry in that parish, God, I trust, had a secret love in his heart for him, and at last it broke forth and discovered its flame, for in the year 1797, he was brought to see and to feel himself a sinner lost and undone, and in the gospel, I hope, he found a sovereign remedy. And when he had undergone this blessed change, he changed in his preaching, and the most of his parishioners changed in their feelings towards him, for, in a very short time their high esteem of him was turned into gall and vinegar, and they in their hearts despised the man they once esteemed.

"By the preaching of this Mr. Flockton a very considerable excitement was created in the minds of many people, both in the parish where he was located, and in parishes round about; and, under God, a foundation seemed to have been laid for the word of life to be preached in that region of country in future days.

"Under the preaching of Mr. Flockton the Lord was pleased to send down upon me his Holy Spirit, by whose agency I was convinced "of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment." (John xiv. 8.) I was here brought to see and feel, in some small degree, that my condition was by no means a safe one, and that it was necessary something should be done in order to make my situation more secure, lest I at last should be lost for ever, but what that something could be which would improve my condition was more than I knew. At last, however, I concluded it must certainly be a reformation in my life and manners. I saw I had made myself vile, and I thought I could make myself holy every whit, and if I did so, my state as a sinner before God would be improved, and as I saw an abundance of work before me necessary to be attended to, and I capable of attending to it, I, with all readiness of mind, commenced a reformation, being certain, in my own mind, that I thereby should recommend myself to the favour of God. And as conviction had not as yet made a very deep furrow in

my soul, so I fondly imagined that I should soon obtain peace and quietude of conscience, and all would be well."

These convictions were weak and shallow, and led him to reformation, and the attempt to propitiate the favour of God by good works. At this he toiled for some years, and, as usual, fruitlessly enough, till the Lord set his hand a second time to the work, and sent home the law with deeper power into his conscience:

"But, before the year of jubilee came on, I was suffered to sink low down and inwardly to smart, from a deep sense of the ruinous nature of sin and the curse of a broken law, which holy law was sent home to my conscience, and, like a lion, it made a strange seizure of my legal spirit, and wrecked and tore my mind all to pieces; and under this operation I was a great sufferer; and many cries and tears it cost me before relief was administered to my wounded spirit. By this circumstance, I was made to see much more clearly than before the dreadful turpitude of my corrupt nature, and to feel the guilt and burden of sin far more sensibly than I ever before felt it. Of a truth, I here saw myself undone and lost. Here the corrupt fountain of iniquity in my bosom was laid open to my view, and most dreadfully appalling I found the sight to be. I found my very nature was sin, and that: 'I was shapened in iniquity, and in sin my mother conceived me.' (Ps. li. 5.)

"But, painful as this discovery was to my feelings, I have great cause to adore and magnify the Lord for thus dealing with me, because so deep a wound being opened in my heart made the more room for the gospel seed to lodge and take a faster root.

"I now stood trembling before God; yes, I fearfully trembled, and a sinner, the chief, I appeared in my own eyes, and was as filthy as sin could render me. I inwardly groaned as a man groaneth who is in great bodily pain. Indeed, I was thrown into strange surprise, and deep was the wound in my heart, and most sore my distress. Withal, I was so amazed at what had befallen me, that I was like one desperate; but where to fly for relief, I knew not; for my sandy foundation had given way, and my burdened soul was exposed to divine vengeance.

"This was an awful day to me; for my iniquities compassed me about, and the wrath of God was hot against me, and by the law I was condemned; nor could I then tell whether there was any mercy for me; but of bitterness, and sorrow, and pain, and frights, and fears, I found an ample store; for 'the waters of a full cup were wrung out to me' on that occasion. (Ps. lxxiii. 10.)

"I thought there was no more chance of salvation for such a wretch as I, than if I had been a brute or a devil. I cried unto God in my distress, and poured out before him my complaint, but found no helper near; I was forlorn, and all things around me looked desolate and dark. Despair seemed to seize my mind, and to drag me down almost to the pit of destruction.

"In this sad state I continued for more than a year, and at times I suffered most grievously, and many bitter things I wrote against myself. Yes, my days were spent with grief and sighing; and often to some solitary place would I retire, and there mourn and wish I had never been born, or that 'I had been carried from the womb to the grave.' (Job x. 19.) Here, also, I would beg of the Lord to call me by his grace, and make known to me his great salvation; for I now greatly felt the want of grace, and Christ, and all heavenly blessings; and I clearly saw that nothing short of those things could bring true relief to my burdened mind; and yet, for the present, all those things were withheld from me, and I left at an uncertainty about whether or not I should ever obtain them; and yet I knew that if I did not, I should be undone for ever.

"The day of human merit was now about closing, for the sword of the Lord was upon the arm and upon the right eye of my pharisaical spirit, and this arm was fast drying up, and this right eye becoming dark. (Zech. ii. 17.) And thus I had no hope from that quarter, so that, look which way I would, all was desolation, and I found trouble and sorrow both by day and by night, for I saw that much was at stake with me, and I felt it sensibly. A blight was upon all

my pleasant things, and I experienced the force of those words, 'I have smitten you with blasting and mildew.' (Amos iv. 9.)

"But although I was thus smitten and thus dealt with, and thus hard put to it, yet my great necessity obliged me to cry to the Lord, and to beg of him to be favourable unto me, if he could. Before him I poured out all my trouble, and confessed all my sins and faults, and I also renounced all claim to human merit, worth, and worthiness, and also relinquished all my former hopes of salvation by the deeds of the law of Moses, and frankly acknowledged myself a sinner lost and undone, and that I richly deserved the displeasure of heaven. All this I performed before God without disguise, for I meant and felt what I said; it was not a time to dissemble or to act perfidiously. My condition called for candour and honesty, and honest I was before the Lord. I was willing to own myself a transgressor, and that God would be just according to the tenor of his law in damning me, but I was not willing to be lost, and hence I begged of the Lord for pardon and peace."

During this period of bondage and sorrow, he was in the habit of hearing Mr. Huntington:

"In January, 1800, I was living in the town of Wandsworth, four or five miles from London; and, while there, my mind was much on the rack, for my religious concerns were all at sixes and sevens, and not the least appearance of a change taking place for the better. In this town I suffered a good deal in body and mind, for I was far gone and low sunk in soul trouble. On Sundays I used to walk into London to hear the gospel from the mouth of the celebrated William Huntington, but although I was thus placed under so bright a ministry, the Lord did not see proper to discharge my captive soul from prison by the means thereof; but I received much light and information in the gospel, and in many parts of scripture which I was much in the dark about before; but as the day of my release had not yet come, so by no means whatever could my soul come forth from the storm and tempest, and the bondage of the law, where I had lain so long and suffered so much. We are told that the Lord 'breaketh down, and it cannot be built again; he shutteth up a man, and there can be no opening.'" (Job xii. 14.)

But we pass on to the account of his deliverance, and will let him in this, as we have hitherto done, speak for himself:

"Early in the spring of this year, I left Wandsworth, and returned to my native parish, taking with me all that darkness, trouble, and load of sin, and guilt, and remorse of conscience under which I had so long been bowed down. And although I went constantly to hear the word preached, yet for me there was no comfort, go where I would. Of misery, wretchedness, and woe, I found an ample store; and this text has been on my mind, as appropriate to my case: 'So am I made to possess months of vanity, and wearisome nights are appointed for me.' (Job vii. 3.)

"In those days, the Rev. John Harm, of Horsham, in Sussex, would be much on my mind, and I was irresistibly led to think that I should be better in my soul if I could hear him preach. From where I then lived to the town of Horsham was fourteen miles right across the country; and I had no way of getting there but that of walking; and I was fearful that twenty-eight miles would be too far for me to walk in one day. But, as my mind got worse and worse, and my desire to hear Mr. Harm increased, I arose early on Sunday morning, June 15th, and started off for the town of Horsham, with a mind full of darkness and confusion, and a bosom surcharged with grief, and within were a multitude of thoughts; and wonder I did what that day would bring forth, and what I should do in case my hopes and calculations were cut off.

"I was now on my way to hear a man concerning whom I often had a multitude of strange but pleasant thoughts; and how I should hear and what I should hear, and the effect that the preaching would produce on my worn-down soul, were things that concerned me much as I moved along. And while thus deep in thought, and sending many ejaculatory petitions to heaven for blessings on

me that day, I found my soul begin to soften and to melt down, and pleasing sensations to increase so fast upon me, and divine light to shine so clearly within me, and my mind so to expand, and my conscience to lose its burden, that I was made greatly to wonder at what was going on, and to look about me at a strange rate; for I had never before felt and seen such mighty things as I then and there felt and saw. And, at this moment, it was said to my soul, 'Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth.' (Rom. x. 4.)

"This was a healing word to my soul, for it came with power and great glory as well as sweetness, and before it my darkness fled and my fetters burst, and my load of guilt dropt from my conscience, and my hardness of heart gave way, and Moses was silenced and Satan driven from his seat, and the lawful captive delivered. I was so astonished at all this, and so uplifted in soul, that I scarcely knew where I was or what was the matter with me. But the blessed words were still before me, 'Christ is the end of the law for righteousness,' &c. O yes! thought I, now I see how it is; Christ fulfilled the law for me: he is the end of it; and beyond Christ the law cannot go, for he is the end of it for righteousness to every one that believeth, and this I do believe; and in Christ I believe, and hence the law cannot get at me, for Christ standeth between me and the law, for he is the end of it."

As we learn from our private correspondence, as well as from what we have seen of his various publications, that Mr. Osbourn is the chief champion of truth in the United States, we have been desirous to give copious extracts from his experience. In our next number we hope to accompany him to America, and lay before our readers some further account of the Lord's dealings with his soul, and therefore reserve our editorial remarks to that occasion.

(To be continued.)

POETRY.

THE CONTRAST.

The man that's call'd by sovereign grace
And has the love of God within,
Will be opposed by Hagar's race,
By Satan, unbelief, and sin.

Against his soul they all combine,
And vex and tease him day by day;
Temptations, too, and trials join
To daunt him travelling on his way.

But the professor, he goes free
From trials and the assaults of hell;
His safety he can always see,
And so concludes that all is well.

He goes to hear, and seems to rest
On doctrines floating in the head;
About his state he's ne'er distress'd,
Nor yet presumption does he dread.

Easy and smooth he goes along,
And has no soul-perplexing cares;
His faith and hope are always strong,
Not troubled with sad doubts and fears.

No, he can love, aye, and believe,
And take the promise if he please;
He feels no cause to mourn and grieve
But always seems to live at ease.

Rochester, Kent.

Not so the man that's born again;
He's often fill'd with sore dismay;
Sometimes he says with grief and pain,
"I fear I ne'er was in the way."

He's tempest-toss'd and cannot rest;
Sometimes can no deliverance see;
Which makes him cry, "I am oppress'd,
Dear Saviour, undertake for me."

He reads the word and heaves a sigh,
The promise does no joy impart,
Until the Spirit from on high
With power conveys it to the heart.

But when the Lord is pleased to shine
With beams of mercy in the heart,
And sheds abroad his love divine,
Then hell and unbelief depart.

And O, what peace and joy is felt
When Jesus shows his smiling face;
He feels his heart begin to melt,
And cries, "Salvation's all of grace."

No bondage, then, nor slavish fear
Is felt, but sweet humility;
But O, how short these seasons are,
At least I find it so with me.

A POOR THING.

THE
GOSPEL STANDARD,
OR,
FEEBLE CHRISTIAN'S SUPPORT.

"Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness; for they shall be filled."—Matt. v. 6.

"Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began."—2 Tim. i. 9.

"The election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded."—Rom. xi. 7.

"If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest.—And they went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch; and he baptized him.—In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost."—Acts viii. 37, 38; Matt. xxviii. 19.

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ON THE UNPARDONABLE SIN.

Dear Madam,—I received yours of the 1st instant, and must confess that it afforded me much comfort, as it served to satisfy me that God still condescended to own and bless my labours. I have found such accounts as yours the best antidotes against fainting in the work of the Lord, and have often perceived that God has sent them, after some temptation, reproach, or opposition has cast me down, as a reviving cordial, and as an encouragement for me to go on in his work, notwithstanding the difficulties that attend it. Tidings of God's approbation are to counterbalance the reproaches of carnal critics, and they generally fire the heart with zeal and love, which dispel the carnal fear of man.

I would willingly, Madam, comply with your request, but it takes up a great deal of time to write a sermon, and as I am so much exercised, I cannot complete it under a month for want of time. In the meanwhile the views wear off from the understanding, and I have not strength of mind to relate it in writing as it was delivered; besides, the life, warmth, power, quickness of thought, and sharpness of expression which sometimes appear in the pulpit, under a lively frame, go off from the soul when the minister has done, unless a man has time to sit down and finish it immediately, while it lies fresh on his mind; which is a blessing that has never yet been granted to me. However, I will here mention a few of the heads of it, as well as I can remember them; and as God owned the hearing of it, to deliver you out of the dreadful temptation, I hope he will own the reading of this epistle, to keep you in the enjoyment of your present liberty.

The unpardonable sin goes by various names, as I find them scattered up and down the word of God. It is called "great wickedness," for it is said that "when the sons of God saw the daughters of men that they were fair, that they took them wives of all which they chose." (Gen. vi. 2.) And also after that, "When the sons of God came in unto the daughters of men, and they bare children unto them, the same became mighty men, which were of old, men of renown; and God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth." The sons of God I take to be professors of religion, and some real possessors of the grace of God among them. They married the daughters of Cain, who were begotten under the guilt of innocent blood, and perhaps they were partakers of their malice and desperation; as God often "visits the iniquities of the father upon the children, unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate him." If this were the case, such mothers would doubtless bring their offspring up in their own persecuting spirit, while, on the other hand, their fathers would instruct them in the worship and ways of God. But as the bloody persecuting spirit of Cain grew up under the infernal tuition of desperate and impenitent mothers, against all the instructions and examples of their fathers, spiritual wickedness broke forth into the world, and filled the earth with violence; no wonder that they are called men of renown, as the desperate brood of Cain could do no less than applaud or renown them for it.

I think that Esau committed the same sin when he sold his birthright, that being typical of the sonship and pre-eminence of Christ Jesus, who is called "the first-born among many brethren, that in all things he might have the pre-eminence." Secondly, it was a figure of the priesthood, which was annexed to the first-born, and therefore was a figure of the grand priesthood of the Son of God. Thirdly, it was a figure of the privileges of all real Israelites. "Israel is my son," says God, "my first-born." Fourthly, his birthright was figurative of pre-adoption. (Gal. iv. 6.) Fifthly, it was figurative of a spiritual birth. (Gal. iv. 29.) Now, as his birthright was typical of the sonship, pre-eminence, and priesthood of Christ; and likewise of the pre-adoption, glorious privileges, and regeneration, or spiritual birth of the elect, his birthright was a typical privilege to him; and his father was also a typical man, for he was a type of Christ as the promised seed, and a type of the elect as heirs of promise. So likewise was his inheritance a typical inheritance. The land of Canaan was a type of the covenant of promise; the land of Canaan is called "the land of promise." Secondly, it was a type of heaven, which is called the better country. The city of Salem, which was in the land, was a type of the metropolis above, called a city, which Abraham and Isaac sought, that has foundations, "whose Maker and Builder is God." Isaac's blessing was typical of the blessings of an everlasting gospel, and Isaac's seed a type of all the chosen Israel of God. Now, as Esau's birthright was typical, both of the sonship of Christ and of his elect, it was holy and sacred; therefore Esau is said to be a profane person, for selling it; and as he sold it for a morsel of meat, he is brought in as making a god of

his belly, preferring that and despising the other. Hence it is said, "he ate and drank, and got up and went his way." Thus Esau despised his birthright. He called God to witness at the sale of it, and swore by his name to Jacob, when he gave it up; therefore he could never inherit the blessing without being perjured; nor could he inherit by law, the inheritance being entailed on the first born; (Deut. xxi. 15—17;) nor had he a promise from God to look to. Hence it is said, that, "when he would have inherited the blessing, he was rejected, for he found no place of repentance, though he sought it carefully with tears." How could Esau inherit the blessing, when the choice of his own free will was against him? He had chosen the pottage and despised the birthright. What place could he find for repentance, when the witness of God, whom he called in at the sale, was against him? This made him cry out when conscience accused him. There was no promise that he could look at, or credit, to afford ground of repentance, for the revealed will of God was against him, "The elder shall serve the younger;" and his own father's declaration was against him, "I have blessed, (Jacob,) yea, and he shall be blessed." Impenitence and absolute rebellion now took place in his heart. He saw that the daughters of the land pleased not his father Isaac, and that the fear of marriage with them had caused them much grief of heart to his mother. (Gen. xxvii. 46.) Then went Esau and took two wives, the first in opposition to Isaac, and to Christ his antitype; the second in opposition to Rebecca, and to the church her antitype, which was a grief of mind to Isaac and Rebecca. Thus Esau was left to the freedom of his own will, and he chose the mess of pottage—a part in this life—as every natural man will do, while Jacob was "preserved in Christ Jesus and called," as all the elect are.

This sin of presumption, or presumptuous sin, is opposed to all sins committed through weakness, ignorance, or through the force of temptation, as being committed willingly, daringly, deliberately, against light, against knowledge, against clear conviction; rejecting the word of God, and reproaching the God of the word, and that in the open face of his priest or minister, as it is written, "And the priest shall make an atonement for the soul that sinneth ignorantly, when he sinneth by ignorance before the Lord, to make an atonement for him, and it shall be forgiven him. But the soul that doeth aught presumptuously, whether he be born in the land, or a stranger, the same reproacheth the Lord; and that soul shall be cut off from among his people, because he hath despised the word of the Lord, and hath broken his commandments, that soul shall utterly be cut off, his iniquity shall be upon him." And again, "If there arise a matter too hard for thee in judgment, between blood and blood, between plea and plea, between stroke and stroke, being matters of controversy within thy gates, then shalt thou arise, and get thee up into the place that the Lord thy God shall choose, and thou shalt come in to the priests, the Levites, and unto the judge that shall be in those days, and inquire; and they shall show thee the sentence of judgment; and thou shalt do according to the sentence which they shall

show thee, and according to the judgment which they shall tell thee thou shalt do; thou shalt not decline from the sentence which they shall show thee, either to the right hand or to the left. And the man that will do presumptuously, and will not hearken unto the priest, that standeth to minister there before the Lord thy God, or unto the judge, even that man shall die, and thou shalt put away evil from Israel." Thus, madam, there is a sacrifice allowed for the sins committed in ignorance, though dreadfully heinous. By ignorance, you must understand it of a person destitute of gospel light and knowledge, and here it was that Paul took refuge after his dreadful persecution of the saints, "But I obtained mercy because I did it ignorantly, in unbelief." Mark that, ignorance and unbelief. But there is no atonement for presumption. Hence David prays. "Keep back thy servant also from presumptuous sins; let them not have dominion over me; so shall I be upright before thee, and innocent from the great transgression."

This great sin appears again in the old law. There is mention made of some, who, though they did not, like Esau, sell their birth-right, yet they sold their possession, which was typical of a part in God's covenant, and it went out of the reach of the Jubilee. Redemption prefigured the great ransom of Christ, and the jubilee the liberty proclaimed by the Holy Ghost to the redeemed. "And if a man sell a dwelling house in a walled city, then he may redeem it within a whole year after it is sold; within a full year may he redeem it. And if it be not redeemed within the space of a full year, then the house that is within the walled city shall be established for ever to him that bought it, throughout his generations; it shall not go out in the jubilee." (Lev. xxv. 29, 30.) In a gospel sense, the house holds forth, first, the man; the fool built his house on the sand. Secondly, it may hold forth God in the covenant, who has been the saints' dwelling-place in all generations. And he that sells himself to work spiritual or presumptuous wickedness, has sold his soul, his God, and all; redemption will not reach him; the Holy Ghost will not proclaim liberty to him; Satan holds him fast; and justice forbids his enlargement. Thus God shutteth up a man and there can be no opening. (Job xii. 14.)

This great sin is called the sin unto death, (1 John v. 16,) because the sinner sins out of the reach of the promise of eternal life, and makes the gospel, which is a dispensation of the grace of God, a savour of death unto death; that is, it convinced him that he was legally dead, and left him spiritually dead, under the sentence due to unbelief; inverting, by the height of his crimes, the very order of the covenant, with respect to himself.

It is likewise called the sin against the Holy Ghost; because the gospel is a dispensation of the Spirit of God that exceedeth the legal dispensation in glory, as much as the sun, in his meridian, does the minutest star; and the great transgressor sins wilfully against the Spirit of God, which is revealed and promised in the gospel. It is called the unpardonable sin, because the guilty wretch tramples under foot the blood of the Son of God,

through which alone he can, consistent with justice, obtain a pardon. The deplorable creature who is left to sin this unpardonable sin, is one who, like Balaam, has had his eyes opened to see the holiness of God in his word. Secondly, to taste the word of God, as Balaam did, when God put a word in his mouth, and bade him speak thus. Or as the way-side hearers did, when they heard the word, and anon with joy received it. Thirdly, it is sometimes done over the belly of the fullest convictions, as was the case with the Pharisees, who, as Christ tells you, knew him even while they conspired against his life, as appears by the parable of the vineyard and the husbandmen. After the master of the vineyard had sent several of his servants, and all met with abuse or death, he, having one son, sent him, saying, "They will reverence my son." "But when the husbandmen saw him," (mark here their knowledge and confession,) "But when the husbandmen saw him, they said among themselves, This is the heir; come, let us kill him, and the inheritance shall be ours." Thus they knew him, confessed him, and killed him; and to this Nicodemus agrees, speaking as the mouth of all the rest, "We know that thou art a teacher come from God; for no man can do the miracles thou doest, except God be with him." Thus they knew that he was a teacher sent from God, and that God was with him, by the miracles he performed, for none could do them except God were with them; and yet all agreed to put him to death, except Nicodemus. Thus they saw and hated both Christ and his Father, and really fulfilled that which was written in their law, "They hated me without a cause." Thus they sinned against their own confessions; against light and knowledge; against all the strong convictions that his miracles produced; and against his holy and innocent life, which two were sufficient to prove him the true Messiah.

But to be short. A man that sins against the Holy Ghost must be enlightened, as Balaam was; and taste the good word of God; (Heb. vi. 5;) or receive the word with joy, as the stony-ground hearers did; (Mat. xiii. 20;) and receive some knowledge of the word, which Peter calls, "knowing the way of righteousness." He must also have his enmity slain by the power of the word, as Saul had, and be reformed by it, as Herod was; what the Saviour calls, the unclean spirit going out of a man, and leaving him empty, swept, and garnished.

All this may be done by a soul where the plough of real conviction never drew a furrow; where real faith and pure love never took root. "Having no root they withered away," that is, their joy withered away, and all their profession was scorched up, in a fiery trial, for the want of moisture. (Luke viii. 6.) How could it be otherwise, when the whole profession was destitute of a broken and a contrite heart? It is said to fall on stony ground, where it had not much earth, where it only floated on the understanding, slew their enmity, and moved their passions, and for want of moisture, or of the Spirit, the water of life, to soften the soil, and make way for the root, it was scorched, and when the sun was up, it withered away. Joy withered away from the want of a good root; real love

is the root of a stable joy, and they withered away from their profession as well as their joy, or, as Peter says, "they turned from the holy commandment delivered unto them," for want of a rooted faith in the mind. Thus their lamp goes out for want of oil; their joy withers for want of a rooted love; and their confession and profession is all scorched in a fiery trial, for want of a rooted faith, and of the soil of a broken heart; and all this is for the want of divine moisture to make it so.

When this is the case, as Peter says, he abandons his profession and reformation, "For if after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, they are again entangled therein, and overcome, the latter end is worse with them than the beginning. For it had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than, after they have known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them." Our Lord calls this a withering away; Peter terms it, a turning away from a knowledge and reformation; and Paul calls it, a falling away. When this is the case with a man destitute of all rooted experience, Satan will not let him stay there; but, being given up of God, he is led forth into open wickedness, which Paul calls, "crucifying to themselves the Son of God afresh;" because he acts the same part, and appears in the same spirit as those who crucified him at first; and by his open apostacy and wickedness, he puts Christ, in his gospel and in his cause, to an open shame, as they did who arrayed him, exposed him, mocked him, and scourged him. Such are said to sin with the full consent of their will, after an enlightened knowledge of the truth being received, (Heb. x. 26,) inasmuch that he exposes to the open contempt of fools the mystery of the cross; and, by his profaning the sublime mystery of redemption, he is said to tread under foot the Son of God; and, by his open profanity, and daring contempt of the Saviour, to count the blood of the covenant, wherewith Christ was sanctified from our sin, (Compare John xvii. 19, with Heb. x. 29,) an unholy thing; and, by his exposing to ridicule, in profane company, the confessions, the temptations, and experiences of real believers, and bringing into contempt his own profession, as well as the experience of others, and exposing to shame the church of God, he is said to do despite to the Spirit of grace, because he exposes to ridicule and contempt all that he has learned in the church, and opposes, knowingly, the real operations of the Spirit on humble and simple souls. Thus such a monster sins against law, against conscience, against his profession, confession, and reformation; against light, against knowledge, against Christ, against the covenant and the blood of it; against the joys that he felt, against the convictions that he had from what he himself had felt, and from what he saw of the power of God on others; and so sins against the Holy Ghost, and against the church of God, the very temple of God. And, for my part, I can see no ground of hope for such a man, no place of repentance, no promised warrant for faith, nor any way to escape the damnation of hell; because every door of hope is barred against him, the saint

are commanded not to pray for him, nor is there a plea in all the covenant of grace but what he has sinned against. Such men are either left with a seared conscience, a reprobate mind, and impenitent heart, to commit all uncleanness with greediness, or else shut up in black despair, under a fearful looking for of judgment, and in the daily expectation of a fiery indignation from God, to devour such an adversary.

Thus, dear Madam, I have sent you some of the heads of the subject; and as it was blessed to your happy deliverance, I hope God will bless this epistle to confirm your faith in Christ, and of your comfortable part and lot in his great salvation. I find many poor, simple, weak souls harassed by Satan about this unpardonable sin, when, at the same time, there is every appearance of filial fear, tenderness of conscience, anxiety for holiness, contrition of heart, chastity of conversation, diligence in the means of grace, fervour in devotion, jealousy of themselves, suspicion of their own bad and deceitful hearts, which appear to me to be things that accompany salvation, and as far from the marks of an unpardonable apostate as the east is from the west. But it is the devil's business to weaken a good hope, and to support a bad one; to harden the hypocrite, and to distress the sincere. Satan is not divided against himself; if he were, how should his kingdom stand?

You need not have made that apology in your letter. It is the joy of my soul to be found useful, and the desire of my heart to be more so; therefore you are welcome to draw anything out of my earthen vessel that the Lord has been pleased to put therein.

Dear Madam, adieu. May every essential truth and special grace be with you, while I remain, with profound respect, and with a willing mind, Yours to command in the gospel of Christ,

Winchester Row, 5th August, 1785.

W. H.

"THE BLESSING OF THE LORD IT MAKETH RICH."

Dear Brother,—May mercy, grace, and loving-kindness ever rest upon you. Your loving epistle came safe to hand, and truly I read it with pleasure, humility, thanksgiving, and joy. Such a sweet and holy anointing came with it and dropped into my soul, that I could not but exclaim, "His name is as ointment poured forth, therefore the virgins love him."

"How sweet the name of Jesus sounds

In a believer's ear;

It soothes his sorrows, heals his wounds,

And drives away his fear.

It makes the wounded spirit whole,

And calms the troubled breast;

'Tis manna to the hungry soul,

And to the weary rest.

Dear name, the Rock on which I build,

My Shield and Hiding-place,

My never-failing Treasury, fill'd

With boundless stores of grace."

The reading of your sweet letter brought to my remembrance that blessed jubilee when God first set my poor condemned soul at liberty, more than forty years ago, when my chain was taken away, and all my bonds and fetters knocked off, the prison changed into a palace, groans into songs, famishing into feasting, curses into blessings, damnation into salvation, and frowns into smiles. O how feelingly did my poor soul exclaim, "Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me, bless his holy name. Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits, who forgiveth all thine iniquities, who healeth all thy diseases, who redeemeth thy life from destruction, who crowneth thee with loving-kindness and tender mercies." How sweet it is to have a renewal of it in my soul! It is truly refreshing. I have had some hard up-hill work of late, but not without now and then some drops of the loving-kindness of a covenant God, which has encouraged me to still hold on, though many times very faint and feeble; yea, and sometimes so overpowered by sin and the cursed adversary of the brethren, that I am quite at a stand, and fear that I must sink after all. But, blessed, for ever blessed be my never-failing Friend, who sticketh closer than a brother, he appears again with his "Fear not, for I am with thee; be not dismayed, for I am thy God." O what strength, what fortitude, what humility, and what holy wonder and sweet obedience come with his fatherly voice and smiles! We can then truly say, "His mouth is sweet; yea, he is altogether lovely. This is my Friend, and this is my Beloved, O ye daughters of Jerusalem!" It is trying work, my friend, to have hope deferred, but blessed indeed when the desire cometh. It is a tree of life, abounding with all manner of delicious fruit, which fills the poor fainting, sickly soul with such strength and courage, that he can rise up like a giant refreshed with new wine, and bid defiance to earth, hell, sin, men, and devils, for the high praises of God are in his mouth, and a two-edged sword is in his hand.

My dear brother, I have had such blessed moments within the last four years, that not a devil within could either be seen or heard, but were all fled into their dens. O how many times have I thought and believed, yea, and declared, that I could never again sink so low, nor forget the loving-kindness of my God, saying within myself, "My soul's delight shall be to speak of the glory of his kingdom, and to talk of his power." But alas, alas! I find to this day the truth of what dear Hart says:

—"When these short visits end,
 Though not quite left alone,
 I miss the presence of my friend,
 Like one whose comfort's gone.

I to my own sad place return,
 My wretched state to feel;
 I tire, and faint, and mope, and mourn,
 And am but barren still.

More frequent let thy visits be,
 Or let them longer last;
 I can do nothing without thee;
 Make haste, my God, make haste."

So that I am still experiencing that when the Sun of Righteousness shines into my heart it is day with my soul, and I can walk without stumbling; I can sing without groaning; I can say, Abba, Father without stammering; I can smile without a frown; I can say, "I know in whom I have believed," without a doubt; I can shout, "Victory, victory," without putting *if* to it; nay, I can say with confidence, "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me;" and can with delight and courage exclaim, "God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ." But when my Saviour is withdrawn, I find the same flesh and the same devils as ever I did, and they sometimes come up with ten times more rage than ever. But, my dear friend, I am not picturing out these things to discourage you in what you may have to pass through, for I am at a point in this, while God speaks peace into your heart, neither men nor devils can bring you into trouble; therefore, "work while it is day, for the night cometh, when no man can work." When the sun shineth man goeth forth unto his work; and blessed work it is in praising, thanking, adoring, wondering at, and admiring the tender mercies of the Three-One God, the Father's boundless love in choosing, the Son's boundless love in redeeming, and the Spirit's boundless love in revealing and sealing love and blood in the conscience. My friend, it is glorious work, it is precious work; and may the Lord be pleased to favour you with much sweet and blessed intercourse with him. This is the place that beggars all the things of time and sense; here it is that we are made free men, and made to walk at large; it is this which opens the mouth to show forth the praises of him who hath called us out of darkness into his marvellous light. When in this blessed spot we can say with confidence, "For of him, and through him, and to him are all things, to whom be glory for ever. Amen." What a pleasure, what a sweetness, what delight it is to crown him Lord of all! This has been the end of all the sinking, overwhelming, despairing, fearing, distracting trials and troubles that God has brought my poor soul through to this present moment, which have all ended in his glory, and for my real profit and good. When God's light shines into my heart, I am enabled to see that he has led me by a right way to go to a city of habitation; and bless his holy name for it for ever and ever.

I was glad to hear that you were enabled to attend to and walk in the blessed ordinances which our dear Lord has left for his children to walk in; and it is my heart's desire that the Lord may daily add to your number such as he has loved, redeemed, and saved with an everlasting salvation, and that you may be knit together in love as the heart of one man, striving for the faith of the gospel. And may it please the Lord to bless you, as a church, with love and affection one towards another, that you may esteem each other better than yourselves, and that there may never be any lords and masters amongst you, but be subject one to another, being clothed with humility; for our God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace to the humble. O what a blessing it is for brethren to live in peace and

love one with another. David says, "Behold how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity! it is like the precious ointment upon the head, that ran down upon the beard, even Aaron's beard, that went down to the skirts of his garments; as the dew of Hermon, and as the dew that descended upon the mountains of Zion, for there the Lord commanded the blessing, even life for evermore."

My kind love to all inquiring friends. My dear wife was much humbled and melted whilst reading your letter, and desires to be remembered to you. And may the blessing of God still rest upon you, that you may daily prove that "the blessing of the Lord maketh rich, and he addeth no sorrow with it." So prays your unworthy brother,

Trowbridge, Feb., 1843.

J. W.

A CONQUERED REBEL.

Dear Friend,—I hope this will find you in the sweet enjoyment of the love and favour of a covenant God, which alone is worth living for. As for myself, I must say, that the days of darkness are many; long nights, with short intervals of light, I appear destined to have. But these things teach me that it is not my hold of Him that preserves me, but his paternal love alone which secures me first and last. My parent's arms, and not my own, are what hold me fast. I often wonder when I find my soul following hard after him through such mazes, and contradictions, and terrible mortifications. Give up I cannot, though wearied I am, and still press on I must, for I feel the exhortation of Christ stick by me, "Strive to enter in at the strait gate." O what strivings of soul and longings of heart there are at times in the bosom of an elect sinner to draw near to the strait gate; but how sweet it is to enter in and find a Saviour able to save a hell-deserving sinner to the "very uttermost." O! that "very uttermost" has been a sweet word to my sinking heart many times. "The exceeding riches of his grace;" "the exceeding greatness of his power;" "the deep that coucheth beneath;" "underneath are the everlasting arms;" "Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever;" "I am the Lord, I change not"—on these immortal, immoveable fixtures, rests my hope of enduring unto the end. If these could fail, I should soon be in the state of the damned in hell; but, blessed be God, this is a sure foundation. I have tried it again and again, for I believe the Lord never had such a base, stubborn, obstinate, dissatisfied, rebellious wretch in all his family, and sometimes when he owns me, after some of my ungodly tricks, and persuades my heart that in spite of all I am still his child, (O my dear brother, you know something of my feelings,) it seems to me that there is not a devil nor a lost soul in hell that is half so black or so unworthy of the notice of God, much more of his everlasting love. This is a path no Arminian nor Antinomian ever trod, for they cannot conceive how such a soul can hate sin, and at the same time believe it will never damn him. No, they cannot.

This is one of the stumbling stones to them. But the soul that has felt His sweet kisses has the heifer to plow with. There appear to be many of the family that never had such killing sights of a slaughtered Saviour; no, they never have proved such rebels against the good hand of their Father; but with me every little denial of the thing I wanted has caused my heart to heave with that daring rebellion, that could a profound infidel look in and see it, it would shock him to the centre. And yet, after such feelings, the Lord has shown me, and I have believed, that those things I was so mad after, and which I could have wished to have, even at the expense of damnation, that the possession of them would have been to my harm, and would not have answered the purpose for which I wanted them; yet, when again in this state, I have been as bad as ever. O what long forbearance has the Lord shown to some of his Jonahs! It is well for us, my brother, that the Lord is slow to anger, or he would long ago have said, "Let the rebel have his will, I can bear with him no longer; he has worn me out, let him shift for himself; he is determined for hell, let him go." O, would it not serve us right? Could we endure such ways? No, we could not. But, blessings on his head, he has won our hearts by his love, and by his kisses brought us to sweet obedience. I do long at times to lay this vile body down, and sweetly embrace him without a clog; but there are moments when I feel his embraces. I have to travel long without feeling a ray of light, and sometimes think how my religion will stand the test of death; for my unbelief is so great, that I doubt everything, and sometimes fear I shall go to hell after all. O! this is trying work, but it is the work which I am in; it is feeling that his sweet embraces can allay my fears and satisfy my soul. I do dread the things that attend me in life, and it is when I feel his love that I long to lay me down and die in order to find eternal rest; but while I am in this life, I do hope the Lord will of his mercy preserve me from such a spirit of rebellion. Whatever be his will concerning me, a path of tribulation I do expect, but the things which make my path tribulated I do not expect, for they are of such a nature as to make me wonder whether mine is the path of the just. It seems to me that my heart opposes every step of the way the Lord leads me, and I often think that if I were led any other way, I could better see it to be a path of tribulation; but to be shut up in a cold cell, without light or a cry for it, with a hard heart and no warm desires for the communications of the Spirit; dissatisfied with the world and all that is in it; hating myself for my destitution; peevish with everything and everybody, this makes me ten times more miserable. O how I hate myself, when a feeling of this kind arises, and I beg of the Lord to seek me and bring me out of this miserable spot, for I tell him I would live to his honour, as one that is born of God; I would draw near to him with my whole heart; but O how it grieves me to come before him with no heart, no warm desires, no saying unto me, "Seek ye my face;" but I appear as one shut out from the enjoyment of the one I love. But the Lord has shown me how these are working for my good. It makes me highly prize the least warm

feeling in my heart towards him, and it teaches me that every good and every favour comes to me through Jesus' blood, and no other channel, and these things touch me to the very heart, to unite with the ransomed throng, giving praise unto him that hath loved us.—Yours in much affection,

Bradford.

J. M. B.

“THE THINGS WHICH GOD HATH PREPARED FOR THEM THAT LOVE HIM.”

My dear Sister,—As you wished me to write at any time, I feel encouraged now and then to do so. When I write I trust it is from godly sincerity, for if this is not at the bottom of all our profession, when the fire of the Lord comes to try the work, of what sort it is, it will all fall to ruins, like the house built upon the sand, and we must be eternally lost. How important then to pray, “Search me, O God, and try my heart; prove me, and know my thoughts.” I cannot always say, “My heart is inditing a good matter,” as it is written in the 45th Psalm, but I love to have it so. Many persons think, that if their outward deportment is moral and upright, they cannot be very great sinners. The reason is, they know nothing, experimentally, of those words, “The heart of man is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked; who can know it?” The Lord knows the state of all, although all do not know their state. And why do they not know it? Because they are in darkness; and it is said they walk on in darkness, “He that walketh in darkness knoweth not whither he goeth, because the darkness hath blinded his eyes.” This is an awful state to be in, and, what is worse than all, they neither see nor feel it, nor will they believe it. The Holy Ghost, by Paul, describes their state in these words: “If our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost, in whom the God of this world hath blinded the eyes of them that believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine in unto them.” What shall we say then to these things? Why, that God leaves some in this state of darkness and ignorance, according to his eternal purpose, which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord, and illuminates the understanding of others. And who shall say unto God, “What doest thou?” Hence the prophet Isaiah was instructed to say unto the people, “Hear ye, indeed, but understand not; and see ye, indeed, but perceive not.” So that if the Lord has been pleased to give you and me the “light of the knowledge of the glory of God,” to enable us to discern spiritual things, “who hath made us to differ, and what have we that we have not received?”

A short time back, I heard a sermon from these words, “Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man the things that God hath prepared for them that love him; but God hath revealed them to us by his Spirit.” A few days after this, as I was walking in a certain place, this text came again to my mind, with great power and sweetness, especially the latter part of it: “But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit.”

The sovereignty of God, displayed in revealing to the election of grace, things that are hid from the rest of the world, is strikingly set forth in many parts of God's word. The prophet Isaiah speaks of such persons, whose eyes cannot discern spiritual things: "Behold, darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people," and then comes in one of the blessed buts, for the children of Zion; "but the Lord shall arise upon thee, and his glory shall be seen upon thee." There's the revelation of it. And again: "They shall be ashamed and confounded, all of them; they shall go to confusion together, that are makers of idols." Then another but, for the Lord's Israel, "But Israel shall be saved with an everlasting salvation; ye shall not be ashamed nor confounded, world without end." Again, the psalmist, speaking of the mortality of man, how he cometh up like a flower, and is cut down, and that "his days are as the grass, which to-day is in the field, and to-morrow is cast into the oven," breaks out with another blessed but, for those that fear God: "But the mercy of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting, upon them that fear him, and his righteousness to children's children; to such as keep his covenant, and remember his commandments to do them." The martyr Stephen declared, before the Jewish council, that they were "stiff-necked, and uncircumcised in heart and ears." When Christ preached to the people he used to say, "He that hath ears to hear, let him hear," implying that there were some who were circumcised by the Spirit of God to hear and understand divine things; that the mysteries of the kingdom of God are revealed to some, but not to others; that they are "hid from the wise and prudent, and revealed unto babes;" and that it seemed good in the sight of God that it should be so. If so be that this were not the case, where would be the distinction between the tares and the wheat? Whatever sect or party we may belong to, one thing is evident, that we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, where sect and party will not be known. Then it will be discerned between the righteous and the wicked, between him that serveth God, and him that serveth him not. Again; it is said in the book of Job, "He openeth the ear to receive instruction;" and in the Acts, that "the Lord opened the heart of Lydia, so that she attended to the things spoken by Paul; and again, "The Lord hardened Pharaoh's heart, that he hearkened not unto them, as the Lord had said;" for he "openeth and no man shutteth, and he shutteth and no man openeth," so that this is a proof that "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man the things which God hath prepared for them that love him." The apostle John says, "If a man love not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen?" There can be no love without union and reconciliation, for "The carnal mind is enmity against God, for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be." "So then, they that are in the flesh cannot please God." That is one reason why we need to be born again; for we all are flesh, God's elect as well as the rest of mankind, until the Spirit be poured upon us from on high, to convince us of "sin, of righteousness, and of

judgment;" and then the axe is laid to the root of the tree, and all must come down together, as Paul says, "When the commandment came, sin revived and I died." Until a person knows something of these things, experimentally, he cannot love God, nor know anything savingly of Christ. Something must be received from God before we can love him, or have any proof that we are his children. "Every good and every perfect gift is from above." Knowledge of self comes first. What wicked sinners we are in heart! What wrath, enmity, and rebellion, because we cannot have things our own way. Mistrust, self-seeking, and grief on account of it, wound the conscience, and make us cry out, "Unclean, unclean." This makes way for mercy to the miserable. Reconciliation, union, and love to God, through the obedience, sufferings, death, and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ, who is the "end of the law for righteousness, to every one that believeth," having delivered such from the curse of the law, being made a curse for them, are things said to be prepared for the elect. "An inheritance, incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away;" a crown of life, which the Lord has promised to them that love him; "pleasures at God's right hand for evermore." David said, "I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with thy likeness." "We shall be like him," says Paul, "for we shall see him as he is." "Blessed are they that are called to the marriage supper of the Lamb." "The Lamb that is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and lead them to fountains of living waters, and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes."

My dear sister, I trust you know something of these things. I believe it will be found by all of us to be a solemn thing to die. There is a reality in what is said concerning the state of the wicked, as well as of the righteous. The language is expressed in striking words, "Suffering the vengeance of eternal fire," "Tormented by the devil and his angels." O that my mind were more upon these solemn things! It has a good effect. It preserves me from those foolish trifles which I am so often carried away with. O that you and I may be strangers and pilgrims on the earth!

From your affectionate brother,

Islington, London,

J. P. B.

"BE YE SEPARATE."

Dear Sirs,—It pleased the Lord to stop me in my mad career when I was about eighteen years of age, by opening my blind eyes and causing me to see something of my lost state as a sinner. I then went amongst the so-called religious; and that I thought must be right; for I imagined that every preacher was almost an angel from heaven, and that he knew all mysteries. O how I did wish that I was like one! Yea, such was my blind zeal, that I declared that I durst trust my soul to what any preacher said. But still I could not get the thing that I wanted, which was the approbation of God. The preachers told me to believe just *now*; but I felt guilt upon my conscience, so that I could not believe. I went to

prayer-meetings, where two or three were praying at once; and at one meeting, a person was preaching at the same time; so that there was a great uproar. A man came to me, and put his mouth against my ear, saying, "What an awful thing it would be, after all these privileges, if our souls should be lost!" and then he thundered out, "Amen!" When they were weary, they wanted to know how many were set at liberty, which they made out to be twelve, and reckoned me among the number, though I never said so, because I knew that it was not the case. I then began to think and to feel that I was worse than any of them, and one of the worst sinners in the world. I thought that I had committed the sin against the Holy Ghost, and that what I then felt was only the beginning of the torments of hell, which I should have to endure to all eternity.

At this time, I kept falling into sin in secret, and found my heart to be the seat of every foul fiend and every unclean and hateful bird, yea, of sins that I dare neither write nor hint at.

I went on in this state for a great length of time, under the Wesleyan Preachers, who preached perfection in the flesh, and that we were not safe without it, and how blessed it was to enjoy it; which I could readily believe, because nothing troubled me but sin, and I knew that all would be right if I could get rid of that. The class-leader would take up the subject with each one of the members of the class, and press this perfection upon us, telling us that to rest in justification or sins forgiven, was to be in danger of a greater damnation than to die in our wicked state. This I believed, because I was more miserable now than formerly; and I therefore justified all that they said, and remarked within myself, "That is the religion which I want; and it is a pure religion;" for I knew that heaven was holy, and that God was holy, and that "without holiness no man should see the Lord." Being determined to have it, if possible, I read the word of God, attended to family prayer, closet prayer, prayer-meetings, and preachings two or three times on a Lord's Day; and I watched my thoughts, and words, and looks, and walk, to be perfect, if possible; for I knew no other way of being saved. But, alas, alas! instead of getting better and better, I got worse. The more I watched against sin, the more sin did I find; and the more I struggled to be free, the faster I was bound. I fell into secret sin over and over again. Like poor Job, I cursed the day in which I was born; and I cursed the sins that had brought me into that state; yea, I wished that I had never been a professor. I could open my mind to no one; for I knew that they were all too holy to be like me.

One Lord's Day evening, as I was going to chapel, I was so miserable that I did not know what to do; and my guilt was so heavy upon my conscience that I thought, "What shall I say at the class to-day?" I dreaded to tell lies; and speak all the truth I could not. I therefore turned into the fields, to brood over my misery by myself, and sat down upon the ground, weeping, and cursing the day of my birth. But there was a secret something

within me, which told me that more was to be known than I had yet heard of; and this kept me from despair.

Some time afterwards, I was elected clerk, sexton, and Sunday-school teacher in the parish Church, which offices I filled for fourteen years; and I was a Methodist at the same time! I never once thought that there was anything good for aught in the Church, and did not choose it; but my friends thought that it would do me good, as it respects this world; and, therefore, I accepted it, and was well pleased with it for a time. It made me many fleshly friends, and so bettered my condition in life. Whilst here, the Lord was pleased to show me, by his Holy Spirit, the emptiness of all form; and not only that, but to show me the power of godliness, and to reveal the dear Lord Jesus Christ upon the cross, bearing the curse for me, as my Surety, and suffering for my sins, and groaning, bleeding, and dying to save my soul from death and hell. I saw that my sins were laid upon him, and that by his stripes I was healed. At that sight my sins fell off, and the guilt was taken from my conscience; so that it was now impossible to help believing. This was no, "Act faith in the atonement," "Get your sins pardoned," "Get the favour of God," "Get an interest in Christ," and all the rest of the miserable stuff of those blind guides called Methodists. They justify the wicked, and condemn the just; and they bite with their teeth, and cry peace where there is no peace.

When it pleased the dear Lord to show me the way in which he saves poor sinners, through the blood and justifying righteousness of Christ being imputed to them, I could not help telling my religious brethren about it; for I began to see that they were unacquainted with it; and I felt a love towards them, and tried to show them that they were in the wrong path. This threw the whole circuit into such confusion that, by the advice of the itinerants, the class was broken up, to get rid of me.

Some people say that there are ministers who preach the truth among the Methodists. I doubt it. I think that it is there agreed that "if any confess that Jesus is the Christ, he shall be cast out of the synagogue." (I am not writing under the heat of passion; for many years have elapsed since I was in connexion with them.)

As to the Church, I could see death written upon every thing belonging to it, even from the pinnacle to the foundation stone, in reference to both ministers and people. But flesh and blood said, "Bear it; for you have many friends among them; and if you leave, they will all turn against you." I prayed to the Lord, scores of times, that he would direct me, lest I should do what I should afterwards have to condemn myself for doing; and the Lord, by his Holy Spirit, sent these texts with power into my soul: "Let the dead bury their dead. Follow thou me;" "Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues." I told the Lord that they were very kind to me, that I was almost like one of their own family, that I never had such friends before, and that they would do almost anything

to serve me. The Lord replied, "By faith, Moses refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, choosing rather to suffer afflictions with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season." He would not suffer me to pray any more about it; and, when I tried to pray, something would say unto my mind, "Thou hast been convinced often enough. If thou regardest iniquity in thine heart, the Lord will not hear thy prayer."

When, in the ceremony of infant sprinkling, the clergyman dipped his fingers into the water, and marked the child on the forehead, I used to say, "That is the mark of the beast;" and when he prayed that it might lead the rest of its life according to the beginning, I thought that his prayer would not be answered; for it began in lies and ended in hypocrisy. I often said to the old font,* "Thou art a witness against us."

A woman, who was a very wicked person, came to be churched. I looked at her, and thought, "Now, I shall have to tell the Lord that you put your trust in him;" and this I knew to be a lie.

But all this, and ten times more, was not enough to make me quit the old harlot. The Lord laid his rod very heavily upon me for other things. No ordinary affliction would cure me: I was too rebellious. His rod was, to choke me almost to death, when my sins were upon my conscience, and I, in my own feelings, was near the gates of hell; but I knew what it was for. And one Lord's Day, whilst I was in the reading desk, he spoke powerfully to my mind, "I shall have to choke you again," which made me fear that the Lord would kill me in the church. Thus was I driven out, or I should never have been out; and I am saved because the Lord would not let me die. Therefore, free grace is written in my very soul by the finger of God the eternal Spirit.

I have to say, to the glory and praise of God's holy name, that though I lost many fleshly friends, and have had to endure much persecution, I have peace of conscience, and the Lord has given me more and better friends. My bread has been given, and my water has been sure; and, with respect to this world's things, I get on as well as ever, and, I think, rather better. I have learned that all things beneath the heavens are the Lord's, both gold and silver.

For twenty years or more, I saw, in the letter of the word, that immersion was the only proper mode of baptizing; but it was not powerfully laid upon my conscience until several years since, whilst I was witnessing the ordinance of baptism. I could not stand, my grief was so great; and I wished to follow my dear Lord through Jordan, which I have since been enabled to do.

S. T.

* The old fonts were constructed large and deep enough to immerse the child in; for sprinkling was not practised in this country until the reign of Queen Elizabeth, being introduced by the ministers who, during the persecution under Queen Mary, had fled to Geneva. We suppose our correspondent alludes to this in calling the font a witness against them.

A FEW WORDS TO "J. H."

Messrs. Editors,—I hope that you will not think it presumption in my addressing a line to you. I beg to inform you that the case of "J. H.," recorded in the 194th page of the *Standard*, with your answer, has been both interesting and comforting to me; at least I hope so. I often find it very hard work to determine what is the voice of God in my soul, and what is not, unless the dear Lord assure me positively that it is he who speaks. I trust, with "J. H.," that there was a time with me when the Spirit abode with me; when I was blessed with nearness of access to a throne of grace, and at such times entreated the Lord to bless and preserve me, and to make me a real blessing to his church, both in temporal and spiritual things. Ever since I have known anything of God or my own heart, I have had the above desire, and for three or four years back it has frequently been uppermost in my mind, when, I trust, God has communicated something of himself to my soul. Yet I dare not say that he hath taught me thus to pray, although, very often, when led to supplicate for these things, I have felt a confidence in God that he would grant my request, and, in contrition of soul, have been led to exclaim, "Can it be?"

Some time ago, I had three very mysterious dreams, which made a deep impression on my mind, and drove me unto the Lord for direction. I said to some of my friends, at the time, that something would befall either me or the church of which I was, and am still, an unworthy member. And, soon after I had these dreams, it pleased the Lord to plunge me into difficulties of a temporal nature, and to let me experience more of the hidings of his face in soul matters also; and everything relating to both body and soul, to the present time, has appeared to make direct against the fulfilment of my request; yet I am held to the point, and cannot give it up, often feeling that the Lord will grant my request, and, I may add, as often fearing that I am under a delusion; for I am not ignorant altogether of that scripture, "Every imagination of man's heart is only evil continually." I have so often been deceived by my own heart, that I am afraid to trust it. The devil can, and does often, transform himself into an angel of light. Some of God's quickened family know, by painful experience, what it is to ask a favour amiss, that they may consume it upon their lusts; yea, to pray earnestly, and be grounded in a belief, from Scripture testimonies, that their prayer will be answered. But O how galling to the carnality of the human heart, when they find, in answer to what they thought prayer, a wooden image dressed in goat's hair, instead of David! These things make a child of God jealous of his own heart, and bring him, in contrition of soul, to learn to confess the truth of that scripture, "He that trusteth his own heart is a fool."

O what a hard thing it is to be weaned from fleshly confidence! but what a blessed reality! O that I may possess it more! I am often ready to trust anything but God, and to put fleshly feelings in the place of the Lord's humblings.

O what great need we have for the Husbandman with his sharp instrument to lop off the stout and rank boughs of pride, to root up our fleshly confidence, to mar our self-pleasing performances, to destroy our false peace, to mow down our false refuges, to cause us to be sickened with our fleshly prayers, fleshly sighs, fleshly humility, and fleshly enjoyments, and to bring us to feel all our delusive props removed, until we stand ashamed before him, and dare not and cannot look up, but smite upon our breast and our thigh, with a "God be merciful to me, a sinner!" These things, internally received, convince us that it is not in us to direct our steps, and that without him we can do nothing; and they bring us to his feet, not in presumption, but with God-taught and God-wrought humility, to beseech him to try us and search us. These things put us (at least, *me*) in the balances of a faithful Jehovah, and I am wanting in all things. This experience makes us suspicious of ourselves and others, clothes us in spiritual sackcloth, the garment of mourning; not the tears of Esau, nor the repentance of Judas, but the repentance of Peter, and the tears of Mary. Blessed state, enviable feeling! would to God that I oftener had it!

S. E.'s letter, in the 187th page, suits my soul well. O what a blessing to have a tender conscience, a soft heart, and the fear of God! yea, it is a blessing to feel that we need them, but a greater blessing to have them. The teachings of God are desirable.

But I will say no more. I only thought of writing a few lines, to show "J. H." that he was not alone. My intention in writing is nothing but a desire to strengthen others as I am strengthened. But when the soul is broken, this is the time for writing. I want savoury meat, but in myself I find it not.

May the Lord bless and keep you in all things.

Chorley, July 12th, 1842.

J. G.

BROOK'S LETTERS, No. VII.

My dear Friend,—I expected you a little yesterday se'nnight, and last night fully, but I suppose something hindered you. I have stood engaged for some time to visit the east part of the country next week. I therefore apprise you of it, lest you should come and not find me at home. The harvest truly is plenteous, but the labourers are few, which makes the work fall heavy upon those who are constrained to bear the burden and heat of the day. Some there are that can, and will not; some that will, and cannot; and some combine both notes, "Dumb dogs that cannot bark, sleeping, lying down, loving to slumber;" their want of power and will go hand in hand; yet shall they not go unpunished: "Woe to the idol shepherd, that leaveth the flock. The sword shall be upon his arm, and upon his right eye, his arm shall be clean dried up, and his right eye shall be utterly darkened." For those have arms to bolster up and support hypocrites for a while, and to fight against the truth, not for it; while their zeal lasts, they have an eye to see a little of letter truth, but in the end grow careless and unconcerned

about these things, and at last prove to be "twice dead, plucked up by the roots."

I hope that the Almighty is preparing you for some work. I like the appearance of some things you opened up better than I ever did before. You seem to have been exercised in a measure with the plague of your heart, and to have been visited with the chastening of the Almighty. I found somewhat of thankfulness to him for these things, and a petition to carry on the work.

You have in you a cage of unclean birds, whether you feel their strife and evil propensities or not, and I believe you are not altogether a stranger to it. There is a thick crust wrapped round the heart, that must be broken through before the secrets of it are discovered. This requires strong and sharp work. Hence you will find such weapons as these are mentioned, as used by the Lord, arrows, swords, mattocks, axes, and hammers. These must be applied; then the interior begins to be explored; and when once an opening is made, all the compressed evils within will rush forth. This must be known and felt in all its filth and pollution, and then the purging, cleansing, and healing remedy shall be welcome.

It is thus a workman is formed, that needeth not to be ashamed being acquainted with, and well versed in, all the varieties and niceties of his craft.

I think I shall be at home the week after next, but, as I am not my own, I cannot answer for myself.—I remain, yours truly,

July 6, 1806.

W. J. BROOK.

THE PRESENCE OF THE LORD.

The presence of God is dreadful, and not only his common, but his special presence; yea, his most comfortable and joyous presence. When God comes to bring a soul news of mercy and salvation, even that visit, that presence of God is fearful. When Jacob went from Beersheba towards Haran, he met with God in the way by a dream, in which he apprehended a ladder set upon the earth, whose top reached to heaven. Now, in the dream, from the top of the ladder he saw the Lord, and heard him speak unto him, not threateningly, not as having his fury come up in his face, but in the most sweet and gracious manner, saluting him with promise of goodness after promise of goodness, to the number of eight or nine, as will appear if you read Genesis xxviii. Yet, I say, when he awoke, all the grace that discovered itself in this heavenly vision to him could not keep him from the dread and fear of God's majesty: "And Jacob awaked out of his sleep, and he said, Surely the Lord is in this place, and I knew it not. And he was afraid, and said, How dreadful is this place! (Mark and learn) this is none other but the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven." And another memorable visit from God, in which he prevailed with him. Yet even then and there such dread of the majesty of God was upon him, that he went away wondering that his life was preserved. Man crumbles to dust at the presence of God; yea, though he shows himself to us in his

robes of salvation. We read how dreadful and how terrible even the presence of angels have been unto him, and that when they have brought him good tidings from heaven. Daniel had the vision of his salvation sent him from heaven: "O Daniel," said the messenger, "a man greatly beloved;" yet the dread and terror of the person speaking fell with that weight upon this great man's soul, that he could not stand nor bear up under it. So again: "I alone saw this great vision, (and what follows?) and my comeliness was turned in me into corruption." By the presence of God, when we have it indeed, even our best things, our comeliness, our sanctity and righteousness, and all, do immediately turn to corruption and polluted rags. Let not man think that he sees God at any time, nor lower the standard of his dignity. Alas! there is a company of poor, light, frothy professors in the world, that carry it under that which they call the presence of God more like to antics than sober, sensible Christians; yea, more like the fool at the play than those that have the presence of God.

JOHN BUNYAN.

THE EXCEEDING GREATNESS OF THE POWER OF GOD IN THE SOUL OF SARAH WIGHT.

(Continued from page 316.)

On April 25th, many Christians came to see her. Her face was covered with a cloth, because of the weakness of her eyes. In a humble manner, she spoke with a low voice, as to herself, saying, "How sweet it is to my thoughts that an infinite God should be a rock and a refuge to a finite creature; a sure rock and hiding-place from all storms and tempests whatsoever. When the man was wounded by thieves, and lay by the way, the priest and the Levite, passed by; they passed by, and helped him not. Creature comforts fail, and then the good Samaritan helps. Christ saves when none else will or can, and when there is nothing in the creature to move him to it. The wounded man did not first desire the Samaritan's help. The deeper the wound is, the greater will be the honour to him that cures it. The Samaritan set him upon his own beast. He left him not to himself, to go whither he would, but took him to an inn. When none cared for him, and all human refuge failed, Christ helped and cared for him." Being told how far formerly she was from hopes of obtaining mercy, she said, "I thought that if all the world were saved, then I might be saved; but else, there was no hope for me. The salvation of Peter, Mary Magdalene, David, and Manasseh, was nothing to me; no, I thought that though Judas should be saved, yet should not I. If all their and Paul's persecuting the saints; if all their sins, and the sins of the thief on the cross, and of all that I could read or hear of were put together in one, they were not so bad as mine. Yet I obtained mercy; I who thought that my time of mercy was past, and that I was damned already. I many times said, 'There is no hope.' Now I may say that it was good for me that I was afflicted. I prize his

mercies the more. All terrors could not humble me, but the sight of God's mercy did. I could never be fully humbled till then. It was not mine own fitting, or mine own humbling; but Christ's fitting, and Christ's humbling. He comes to the soul with power, and causes it to believe. My tongue was not able to tell the misery which I was continually in before; and now my tongue is not able to tell what love and mercy have been shown unto me. I would fain have been dissolved to be with Christ. It was a hard thing for me to be content to live here still; but it is easy for him to teach me to be willing to live or die; and he hath taught me. I was so desperate that I cared not what became of me. Oft was I at the very brink of death and hell, even at the very gates, which were opened for me; and then Christ fetched me out, and shut them. 'O that men would praise the Lord for his goodness, and for his wonderful works to the children of men!' Would that the hundred and seventh Psalm were oft read over! The goodness of God is unsearchable. How great is the excellency of his Majesty, that would yet look upon such a one as I! The week before I kept my bed, I was full of terrors; I rested neither day nor night; I thought that no death was bad enough for me; if all kinds of death were to have been put together in one, they would have been too good for me; and I walked continually as in fire and brimstone, for rebelling and murmuring against God and my parents. When God hides his face, who is able to bear it? and when he gives quietness, who can cause trouble? He hath spoken the words: 'Lo, thy sins are forgiven thee. I, even I, am he that blotteth out thy transgressions, for mine own name's sake.' Jesus Christ is unchangeable, and therefore I was not consumed. I may say with admiration, 'Lord, what is man, that thou art mindful of him; or the son of man, that thou regardest him?' 'Bless the Lord, O my soul, which forgiveth all thine iniquities, and healeth all thine infirmities.' God is worth the waiting for. There is a blessing pronounced on such as wait for him: 'Blessed are they that wait for him.' I did not wait for him patiently; I was weary, and could wait no longer. But God is not weary; he faileth not, though he lets the creature go away for a time, for his own good, to humble him the more, and to show his own mercy the more. No one was ever as bad as I was; yet, through the goodness of God, I have obtained mercy. I wish that all may take heed of censuring the vilest creatures that are, seeing that the Lord hath done thus for me, the vilest creature; but rather pity them with tears of blood."

Many who had heard what the Lord had done for her, came to see her on the 2nd of May. Speaking to one of them, she said, "O magnify the Lord with me! for he daily compasseth me about with songs of deliverance. I could not endure, but that I see Him that is invisible; I could not see him, but that he first saw me, and gave me faith. Out of his side came forth water and blood: blood to justify from sin, and to purge away the guilt of sin; and water to wash away the filth and to sanctify us. Both are in Christ; and

there they are to be had. He loved me, and washed me in his blood; he loved me before I was washed; and because he loved me he washed me. He was tempted as we are. What was he tempted for, but to succour tempted ones, such poor creatures as I? He takes delight to succour such poor souls. It is our Father's good pleasure to give us a kingdom; he delights in giving us a kingdom; so that neither height nor depth, neither principalities nor powers, nor any other creature, shall separate from him the soul that is in union with him. He hath bound the soul to himself with cords of love, and there shall be no separation."

On the 3rd of May, some one saying to her, "Your enjoyments are more than those of many saints," she answered, "My sufferings have been more than the sufferings of many. Christ is faithful in all that he hath spoken: he saith, 'As our sufferings abound, so shall our consolations also.' Many saints have lived threescore years, and have not suffered so much as I. But the Lord was my shield on my right hand, and therefore no hurt could come unto me. Christ is in me the hope of glory. The God of peace shall tread Satan under our feet shortly; he *shall* do it; he *hath* done it; I see it done. Though he was strong that possessed this house, a stronger than he hath dispossessed him and possessed it himself. It was too hard for men or angels. I am silent at the goodness of God. Had I the tongue of men or angels, I could not tell the terrors which I formerly experienced, nor my present enjoyments."

On May 4th, a person spoke of God's abundant goodness to her. She said, "Jesus Christ found me and loved me before I could love him. He came to me when I was in the most disconsolate state that ever soul was in, when I must either be delivered or destroyed. I could abide no longer, and then Christ came. Christ is my life; and my life is hid with Christ in God; and when Christ shall appear, I shall appear with him in glory. How admirable is it that he should die for me, to give me life! He came to give faith to my faithless soul, and to soften my hard and unbelieving heart. He brought such as were aliens and enemies to be near himself. And is not this to be admired? He first finds the soul, and then the spouse saith, 'I have found Him whom my soul loveth.' He destroys self, righteous self and all selfs, that he alone may have the glory, leaving nothing for the creature to boast in. 'Turn thou me, and I shall be turned; heal thou me, and I shall be healed; convert thou me, and I shall be converted. This my soul has found by experience.'" It being remarked that the Scriptures said, "Turn ye; why will ye die, O house of Israel?" she answered, "It is Christ that comes in the power of his word and turns them. The church, knowing her own inefficiency to turn, prayed, 'Turn thou me.' Behold, he comes leaping over the mountains and skipping over the hills; and he makes rough ways plain, and raises up valleys. It is as easy for him to pardon mountain sins, multitudes of sins, as one sin. He came to me, and pardoned me, though my sins were as the stars of heaven for multitude. He hath delivered me from the hard bondage wherein I was made to serve. He ap-

peared unto me in the dark and thick cloud; and one beam of the Sun of Righteousness dispelled it in a moment. What a sinful creature was I! I never read of any one that was in so desperate a condition as I was in. But Christ hath delivered me from all my fears; not from one or two, but from *all* of them. I therefore desire the high and the low, the rich and the poor, to magnify the Lord with me, and to praise his name, on my behalf. All his works praise him, and his saints bless him, especially the work of the new creation in the soul. I could believe nothing before. I had no rest, either in hearing or reading. Then Christ made me rest in himself; and though I was weary and faint, he was neither weary nor faint. 'His wrath is but for a moment.' But 'of his mercy and goodness there is no end.' He bore and carried me, and, at last, delivered me. This Rock followed me, though I was not aware of it; the Sun of Righteousness arose with healing in his wings, and the Day-Star arose in my heart. It was a dark heart till he arose; and then he made it light."

The power of God did wonderfully appear in upholding her full seventy-five days without one crumb of bread or meat, and with very little drink, she not being able to eat or drink more than she did; for when, by much urging, she yielded to take somewhat, she could not keep it, but presently cast it up. When an individual endeavoured to persuade her to take a cordial which was prescribed by two physicians, she said that she could not, as the very smell of it made her sick. Another urged her to take some sustenance. She said, "I would, if I could; but I cannot. It makes me sick to think of it. Jesus Christ feeds me." Being again urged, she said, "Pray you, urge me not. God gave me Christ, the food of my soul, when it was nigh starving. Christ is my bread of life. His flesh and his blood are indeed meat and drink. God hath wrought a miracle in delivering my soul; and if he hath appointed that I should live, he will give me strength to take in the one as well as the other." At another time, being pressed to eat, she said, "I cannot do it. I do not abstain out of wilfulness; for I would eat, if I could: nor have I any command or temptation upon my spirit against it; but it is because I cannot. When I have tried, I have been the worse for it. I cannot digest it; and the smell of it hurts me."

Thus she continued until the 11th of June; at which time, this text came into her mind: "Damsel, I say unto thee, arise. And straightway the damsel arose, and walked; and he commanded that something should be given her to eat." (Mark v. 41, 42, 43.) She had a full persuasion that so it should be with herself; and therefore, in the morning, she called for some food; of which she ate heartily and with joy, saying that Christ had sweetened it, and therefore she found as much savour, satisfaction, and delight in it as if she had possessed all the dainties in the world. After eating and refreshing herself, having blessed the Lord, she called for her clothes, though she had not been able to rise, or, long at a time, to hold up her head in the bed, since the 6th of April to the 11th

of June (a period of sixty days). Her clothes being given to her, she put them on, arose, stood on her feet, and then sat down, joyful in the Lord, without receiving any hurt by so doing. These thoughts came into her mind, as from the Lord: "Thou hast fasted long enough; thou shalt fast no longer. It was but to make my power known to the sons of men, what I have done, and what I can do." And after this she arose daily, from June the 11th till the 25th, but remained weak.

On the night preceding June 25th, 1641, she was very ill, and so continued till about two o'clock in the morning; and then God brought to her remembrance these texts: "In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise up and walk. And he, leaping up, stood, and walked, and entered with them into the temple, walking, and leaping, and praising God;" (Acts iii. 6, 8;) "Jesus said unto him, Rise, take up thy bed, and walk. And immediately the man was made whole, and took up his bed, and walked." (John v. 8, 9.) She told these things to her mother; and she arose, opened her hair, and combed it herself, which she durst not suffer to be done for twenty-four weeks before, her head being very sore by reason of the bruises which she gave it against the walls in the time of her terrors. But now she dressed her hair, and neither fainted nor got cold thereby. She then got up and stood on her feet, and walked, praising the Lord, though she had not strength to stand for four-score days before.

Many persons of all ranks, gentlemen, ladies, citizens, ministers, &c., who repaired to her, both in the time of her weakness and afterwards, were ear and eye-witnesses of these things; and they were attested by so many persons worthy of credit, that the truth of them cannot be questioned. A minister, who was frequently with her all this time, wrote down her speeches; and some others did the like in his absence; wherefore, he hath given a more full and large account of them in a book which he has called "The Exceeding Riches of Grace advanced," &c.

She was not, at the time of her recovery, full sixteen years old; yet many who heard of the dispensation of God towards her, and who were themselves in a despairing condition, resorted to her, and, by conference with her, received some support.

After her recovery, she related to a Christian friend what torments she had undergone, for a month together, before she was forced to keep her bed; how she walked in terror, day and night; what a hell she had in her conscience; and how she was tempted to believe that there was neither God nor devil, heaven nor hell, but what she felt in her own conscience; and, therefore, that if she were but out of this life, there would be an end of all her sufferings. And hence she thought to beat out her brains against the walls, till her head was all bloody and swollen. Sometimes she sought to cast herself down from high and steep places. She got knives and other things wherewithal to kill herself, but was miraculously preserved, the Lord having a favour for her. Then she thought that if Christ should come into her, it would be as though

he should go into a dunghill or into carrion. She was tempted to blaspheme God, and could scarcely refrain from so doing, especially on the last day of her soul's affliction, when she was so forcibly urged to blaspheme God and die, in order to be out of her torments, that she was no longer able to withstand the temptation, and was ready to utter forth her blasphemy; but her tongue was so smitten that she could not speak a word. She also said that she used to read above twenty chapters in the Bible every morning, thinking thereby to still her temptation, but was not one jot the better; and that she could remember nothing of what she read, but threatenings and judgments. They were laid before her; but all the promises were sealed up from her. "One day," said she, "I was tempted to throw my Bible into the fire; and I threw it from me; but it did not fall into the fire. For this act I was sorely tormented, Satan suggesting that I would have burned it. At another time, I said, or, at least, was ready to say, 'If the Lord will not save me, let him do what he will with me; let him damn me.' But, afterwards, I was greatly troubled that I should bid him damn me."

(To be continued.)

EDITORS' REVIEW.

The Lawful Captive Delivered. By James Osbourn, Minister of the Gospel in the City of Baltimore. Baltimore, 1835.

(Continued from page 330.)

From all that we are able to gather from the accounts that we have heard and read of the state of vital religion in the United States of America, we have reason to believe that it is at a very low ebb. The form, perhaps, is more prevalent there even than in England, it being, we understand, almost discreditable there not to be a member of a church. But truth, either doctrinal or experimental, is little known and less prized; and what seems a remarkable feature, is pretty much confined, as we learn from some private correspondence, to the English settlers. Even Mr. Osbourn, who seems to be the chief champion for truth in the United States, is, as we have seen, by birth an Englishman, and was brought to a knowledge of the truth before he emigrated. To this point in his history the course of his narrative leads us; and we therefore resume our extracts from his work at that period:

"Various were the workings of my mind in regard to leaving a country where I was twice born, and twice christened, and twice rescued from temporal death. I thought of the many places where, in darkness and sorrow, and with a conscience loaded and polluted with sin, I had mourned before the Lord; and also of those pleasant spots and hill Mizars where my soul had been made so happy and joyful in Christ Jesus my Saviour. But still I knew the Lord was omnipresent, and would be found of those who seek him and search for him with all their heart; (Jer. xxix. 13, 14;) and this I hoped I should be enabled to do on the continent of America, as well as I before had done in different places in Great Britain. * * *

We sailed from London dock on June 9, 1805, but the voyage contributed nothing valuable to the new man of grace in my soul, but contrariwise; for

while on board with a vast crowd of passengers, my religious privileges, both open and private, were sadly interrupted, and my mind suffered much from the same. By suffering much, I mean great leanness of soul was again brought on me while there on board the vessel, and in company with so many mad-like men and ungodly mortals. Nor did I fully recover from this sad state of mind until the year 1813, as my reader will by and by see."

"Evil communications corrupt good manners;" and the truth of this James Osbourn found to his cost, for from this time he dates a sad period of backsliding from God. Speaking of the company that he associated with on shipboard, he says:

"In company with those mockers of God my religious thoughts soon became a good deal scattered, and my poor unstable mind light and trifling, and I was once more suffered to indulge in little things which were unbecoming a Christian; such as associating too much with the ungodly passengers, and conversing too freely with them of things trifling and vain, and what I ought to have discountenanced and shunned."

His arrival in the United States, and the state of his soul, will be clear from the following extract:

"Through the good hand of God upon us, we all arrived safe at New York late in the evening of the 3rd of August, and the next morning we went on shore. I continued in that city until the yellow fever broke out; and in the course of this time I heard preaching at different places, and I also became acquainted with many professors of religion; but with many I was not well pleased, for I thought I saw their minds to be in no better state than was my own, and hence I met with cold comfort there.

"But a regularity in the duty of prayer, and also in reading the Bible, and religious conversation, was now again resumed by my brother-in-law and myself; and this, through the mercy of God, was a means of bettering the condition of my mind; but though even now it was not as once it was, for I did not feel that going out of soul after God, and that panting for the waters of life as I had formerly done, nor was I visited by the Holy Ghost, as used to be the case.

"It was but seldom that I could get a view of Jesus in those lovely and heart-cheering forms in which he appears to saints who live near to him. Occasionally I have felt some little softness of affection and melting down of soul, but it would soon wear off again, and coldness and hardness of heart succeed, and then again my religion would appear as a mere formal thing, and my attendance on it was like a door turning on its hinges. In prayer there was no seraphic glow or heavenly fire felt; and in reading the scriptures, no shining light would break forth; and the word preached was to me a dead letter or a mere tinkling sound. And thus things were not with me as in months and years past, even when the candle of the Lord shined upon me, and when by his light I walked through darkness." (Job xxix., 3, 4.)

The Lord, however, did not leave him without some touches of his gracious finger:

"What a poor restless creature a Christian is, when the Lord leaves him in darkness to mourn, and discloses to him more of the evils and abominations of his heart! I have been shocked and sore affrighted at the fresh discoveries which have at times been made to me of my inward iniquities and weaknesses; and when I have gone on my knees for the purpose of confessing them before the Lord, the discovery has been so enlarged that it has appeared as if I was covered all over with them; or as though 'from the sole of the foot even unto the head there was no soundness, but wounds, and bruises, and putrifying sores.' (Isa. i. 6.) No man with this picture before him can boast of his goodness, nor yet pride himself in fleshly perfection. By these views of myself, I have been taught that there was no hope of salvation for me but in a Saviour's blood, and I could willingly bow and venture my polluted soul on the atonement made by Christ, the Anointed of the Father. And to this day, here, and there alone, is

my hope fixed; and, as a sinner base and vile in myself, to this dear refuge I flee for safety; and I do despair, and I wish to despair, of ever finding a refuge for my sin-sick soul but in the slaughtered Lamb of God. And if but a fraction of human merit, or the least grain of worth or worthiness on my part, be necessary in the business of my eternal salvation, my condition is just as hopeless as that of devils. And hence I do now before God totally renounce all confidence in the flesh, and relinquish all hopes of being saved by the law, and venture alone for salvation on Jesus, who is 'able to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him.' (Heb. vii. 25.) I also consider, and in heart believe, that all pretensions to religion, and to an interest in the gospel, short of this, will, and necessarily must, end in delusion and ruin."

And now we come to a part of his experience which we would gladly withhold; but as he has not done so, and as the Lord eventually brought him out of it, we will give it in his own words. We must premise that he had commenced business, and was soon so deeply engaged in it that it became a snare to his soul:

"In the space of a short time there was but little to be seen about me but an outward show, and nothing very promising about that; nor can it well be, for when the affections are estranged from God, and a blight is brought upon the life and power of religion in the soul, the shell is but an indifferent looking thing in the eyes of spiritual-minded men. The comforts of religion were gone from me, and my heart was laid open to receive forbidden things; things I mean of a worldly nature, and which, when indulged in, are sure to impoverish the soul, and to estrange it from things sacred and divine. This was now my case, nor did I stand alone in this condition, for I found some professors of religion in no better case than what I was in."

He had at this time no faithful ministry to sit under, though, as he says:

"I used to go from place to place to hear preaching, but mostly to the Baptist places of worship, for I felt some little hankering after that body of people, believing they had most truth on their side in reference to baptism and some other points of doctrine."

He was not then baptized, nor did he go through that ordinance until several years afterwards:

"But go where I would; I was barren in soul and dark in mind, and what was worse yet, I mourned not over the sad state I was in, and what the Lord, by the mouth of his servant, once said to Ephraim and Israel, might have been said to me in those days, 'Ephraim, he hath mixed himself among the people; strangers have devoured his strength, and he knoweth it not; yea, grey hairs are here and there upon him, yet he knoweth not. And the pride of Israel testifieth to his face, and they do not return to the Lord their God, nor seek him, for all this.' (Hosea vii. 8, 9, 10.) I had mixed myself with the world to the almost forgetting of the Lord, who had done so much for my soul; and my spiritual strength was nearly all devoured by strangers, and I cared but little about it; and as grey hairs are indicative of a decline of life, so my spiritual life was much on the decline, and yet I did not rightly lay this to heart, and the pride of my soul loudly testified against me, but I did not return and seek the Lord God for all this."

But he was to fall into a worse state than this, and yet not without some secret movements of the Spirit of God upon his heart:

"On some occasions I have felt my heart to give way a little, and to soften down, and to feel some slight sorrow on the account of my sad condition. At such times I would pause awhile, and wonder what all these things could mean, and how they would end. And sometimes, in reading a good book, I have been considerably affected, and then I could but look back on certain places and things with regret, and inwardly sigh, and say, 'O that I were as in months past, as

in the days when God preserved me.' (Job xxix. 2.) But in truth, whatever little touches of divine grace, and of the spirit of the gospel, I might at times feel in my soul, communion with the Lord of life and glory was certainly broken off for the present, and a cold winter was upon me, and no access to God at a throne of grace, or otherwise, could I find. Also Satan was busy with me in those days, and suggested that as I was in a backsliding state of soul, and all intercourse with heaven was shut up, I might as well indulge myself in the pleasures of sin. A suggestion of this sort has struck me often, and brought me to a pause what to do and how to act.

Satan at this time, seeing his strength departed from him, lay in wait, and eventually succeeded in casting him down :

I have with all my might striven against Satan's vile suggestions, and tried at times to look up to God for help in so distressing an hour, and sometimes I have felt decidedly opposed to a compliance with such base suggestions. .

"But, sad to tell, my adversary at last gained the ascendancy over me, and dragged me into open vice, and into a most fearful state I quickly sunk down, and as I sunk, so my feeble hope in a Saviour gave way, and strange work was soon made in my heart by sin, and my poor mind was all in a flurry and confusion, and the devil was most furious with me, and he dragged me down with less than half my consent; but when down, the shock was greater than I could well bear up under, and I appeared at once as if I were metamorphosed—changed into something which I was not before.

"As I now thought there was no hope nor any chance of salvation for me, and that I had forfeited everything like religion, I might as well yield to the gratifications of the flesh. But who can rightly conceive of the desperate struggle there was in my mind between the flesh and the spirit at the time of this my great overthrow? All was turmoil in my bosom; wretchedness and misery dwelt there; and no abatement of this inward misery could be found, but in the farther commission of vice. The fatal die was now cast, and under the lashes of a guilty conscience, and with sin upon me, I fled as a fugitive from God. An outcast I stood, and all forlorn, and what my views, and thoughts, and feelings, and the exercises of my mind were, but few can tell."

Satan had now gained his point, and fearful work he made in his soul. As a finishing stroke, he sought to entangle him in the dreadful toils of infidelity :

"With deism also I have had desperate struggles. Satan laid close siege to my mind in this matter, and strove hard to settle me down in that most damnable vortex. But when he had drawn me to its very margin, and brought me to wish it was true, for just such a refuge as deism I wanted, something within me would seem to say, 'There is a righteous God, and there is a hell, and there is a reality in religion, and before God I must some day stand, and deism cannot prevent it, nor can it afford me refuge at this time; I feel most wretched within.' And thus my misery within seemed to prevent the inundation of deism to my soul. * * *

"But the devil had yet another onset with me about deism; and he carried his point so far as to make me think that I was sure deism was an all-sufficient refuge to fly to and to trust in. Yes, for a few minutes, I felt confident that I was correct about this matter at last; and I solemnly declare that I inwardly felt sorry for some great and able men who had preached and written so much on the subject of religion, when in religion I knew there was no reality. But although I was at times so much upset by deism, yet the Lord never once suffered it to take fast hold of my mind. It even in those days appeared to me that Satan was always in a hurry and flurry in tempting and working on my mind, as though he was afraid he should not be able to accomplish his end with me, or hold me to the bait which was presented to my view. And perhaps it is in this way that I am to account for the very violent seizures which he at times would make upon my mind."

The snare of politics, too, in order to keep his mind more firmly

in this fearful state, was now added, and in that most exciting period, the war between Great Britain and the United States:

"In this cold, indifferent way, I went on for about a year or two; and, as politics now ran high, I, forsooth, became a lively politician; and when the war broke out between this country and Great Britain, I took a very warm and decided stand in favour of the American cause; and those carnal concerns seemed to place me farther from the Lord than ever. My condition was most fearful. I could take an interest in everything but religion, and that I could pass heedless by. The news of the war, and of battles and victories, I could listen to with eagerness, but had no ear nor feeling about things of much greater importance."

The following reflections we think much to the purpose:

"I saw and found it to be an easy matter to involve one's self in difficulties, and shame, and darkness, and misery; but one of the hardest things in the world to extricate one's self from such a state of captivity. The world, the flesh, and the devil are bad hands to fall into; and most dreadful havoc do they make in the soul when they once get possession; and with those things I was overrun at a strange rate; and it looked to me, at times, as if no person who had ever received so much goodness and grace, and experienced so largely of the love and mercy of God in his soul, as I had been favoured with in times past, was ever suffered of the Lord to go to such lengths in vice, and to sink so low into deism, and become so callous and so indifferent, as was the case with me. Every stratagem did Satan seem to devise by which to entrap my soul and lead me on to ruin. And this political career was a deep device formed to keep my mind engaged till my conscience became so stupified and benumbed as to lose all sense of divine things."

Owing to the copious extracts that we have already made, we shall not be able, in our present number, to furnish our readers with the account he gives of his complete and gracious deliverance from this fearful state of backsliding. But we cannot close our present number without giving one more extract, from which the first steps of his recovery will be clearly seen:

"In this sad state of apathy and cold indifference in reference to religion, as related above, and also very zealous in the cause of politics, I continued till towards the close of the summer of 1813; at which time God was pleased to arouse up my benumbed conscience, and to awaken me to a deep sense of my sad and fearful state; and never had I such strange and awful feelings since I was born as then I had. My sins, and my fears, and my deep distress, were all of a different kind to what they were when I was first awakened to a sense of my lost estate; worse, by far worse, were my feelings, and my distress of mind was much more acute. I saw my sins to be more against God and against his gospel than at first they were; and a sense of them produced thoughts and feelings much more despairing and sinking to my mind than what I felt and found when, years ago, I was under convictions.

"I was so troubled and disturbed in my mind that I knew not what to do. My sins appeared very numerous and of a frightful colour, and all against Christ and his gospel. My remorse of conscience was dreadful, and despair overwhelming. A furnace was heated within me seven times hotter than usual, and I was appalled at all I saw and felt. Aloud to God I cried from real necessity, though sometimes I feared to come before him. I once went on my knees, and said nothing, as I remember, but, 'Thank God I am out of hell, thank God I am out of hell, thank God I am out of hell,' &c., as fast as I could well speak. My politics now were all given up, and my apathy turned to feelings the most acid. I felt at times a vast deal of self-pity, and would think what a poor unfortunate creature I was; how much better it would have been if I had never been born, or especially if I had died before I ran to such dreadful lengths in sin. I would then cry to God in the bitterness of my soul, and I would tell

him of all my woes, and of all I felt and feared. My sins, my atrocious sins, I would lay open before him, and earnestly beg pardon for the same. Yes, I would bow myself down before him as one 'oppressed with grief, a heavy load;' and there and then would I argue, and reason, and expostulate, and plead with the Lord, 'as a man pleadeth for his neighbour.' (Job xvi. 21.)

And that my opportunity of this exercise and wrestling with the Lord might be quite convenient, I used to betake myself to the woods, and groves, and fields, where I could pour out my soul to God in ardent cries and groans. I would sometimes continue in those lonesome retreats for hours and hours together, and there mourn, and weep, and pray, and feel as one forsaken and lost—for ever lost. In this way I continued for some months, and what I passed through in my own feelings, and what my temptations were, and what I feared, and what I in my mind saw and heard, none but God and my own soul knows anything of. For the most part of the time I was greatly in the dark and much dismayed; for I would think of the awful state I had been in so long, and of the sins I had committed, till I was ready to go frantic. But in some instances of my visits to those places I have felt a little encouragement, some light breaking in on my soul, and hope would spring up, and it is surprising to think what an effect this would produce on my mind for the better."

As we have felt much interested in the work, and think that most probably burs is the only copy* in this country, we have given these copious extracts. We are sorry to leave our author under a cloud, but our present number could not do justice to the account he gives of his full deliverance from his backslidings, and we therefore unwillingly defer it, with our editorial remarks, to our next.

POETRY.

"The word of the Lord was precious in those days; there was no open vision."—2 Sam. iii. 1.

In the visions of faith, when Jesus is seen,
And the clouds of my sin now no more intervene,
My fears are all over, my burden is light,
And I'm strong in the Lord, and the power of his might.

Faith and love lend their wings, and my soul soars above
All terrestrial objects, to Jesus, my love,
I weep at his feet and admire his rich grace,
That gave such a wretch midst the children a place.

I think that no more I shall feel grief or pain,
That his goodness and mercy I'll ne'er doubt again;
But, his presence withdrawn, to my place I return,
While my heart with his love now no longer doth burn.

How precious his word in such dark days as these!
When Satan accuses, and doubts and fears seize;
When I fear I shall prove a deceiver at last,
And no comfort can get from things present or past.

Yet true saving faith is his own sovereign gift,
While to tempt and distress is the devil's main drift,
And my own sinful nature takes part with the devil,
For my heart is inclined to all manner of evil.

* Since this was written, we have received a letter from a correspondent at Brighton, who possesses another copy, the identical one which the author sent to Mr. Harm, of Horsham, to whom the work was dedicated. We also received, at the same time, the first number of a re-print of the work, by Mr. Tyler, of Brighton, (to be had, price 2d., of Groombridge, London,) which we were glad to see, as it was our intention to recommend our publisher to print a cheap edition of it.

Guilt, from pride, and from envy, and vile thoughts within,
From rebellion and lust, and from all sorts of sin,
Distresses my conscience, and burdens my soul,
While floods of temptation and sin o'er me roll.

I look backwards, and see only things to regret.
Thus, from all past experience, no comfort can get,
For Satan's broad hands doth my pleasant things hide,
And I fear that to me only ill will betide.

I call to the Lord, "Gracious God, hear my plea;
The light of thy countenance lift upon me.
O, say to my soul, 'Thy salvation I am;'
And my fears and my foes, O, put them to shame.

"Wash my conscience from guilt in the Saviour's rich blood;
O, give to my soul a sweet token for good.

'Tis thy word that I want my poor soul to set free,
To hear thee again say, 'Yea, I have loved thee.'"

Still my soul many days doth without the sun mourn,
By his word oft encouraged to wait his return.
To none else can I go; Jesus only can save;
And, as chiefest of sinners, his mercy I crave.

Sometimes, with sweet freedom, the Spirit doth lead
My soul his free mercy and promise to plead;
When surely, I think, now his blessing will come,
But, my patience to try, still to wait is my doom.

Oft, when fractious, and peevish, and nothing is right,
Of his glorious person my soul gets a sight.
His love, O how great! his grace, O how free!
His mercy, how matchless it seems unto me!

My sins appear hateful, my sorrows I moan,
And lament from straight paths that I ever should roam.
Abased, and brought low, my dear Lord wears the crown,
And his dealings, as right, I most cheerfully own.

LOVE AND BLOOD.

O bless the Lord, he's let me feel
The dew drops from above,
His Spirit all my wounds did heal
With Jesus' blood and love.

Quite passive, like a child I lay,
Unto the will of God,
And felt my sins all gone away
Through Jesus' love and blood.

And all the bills that Moses brought,
Their payment was made good.
What wonders for me I saw wrought,
And all through love and blood.

Peace, like a river, flowed within,
I felt it sweet and good;
My conscience was set free from sin,
And all through love and blood.

I could not help but then believe
Complete in Christ I stood;
Such evidence I did receive,
And all through love and blood.

My feelings I can never tell,
Astonished I stood;
To see vile me redeem'd from hell,
And all through love and blood.
Bedworth, Warwickshire.

I wept while love composed my songs,
My soul did soar above,
And had I had ten thousand tongues,
They'd sung of blood and love!

Then all the glory I could give
Unto the Sacred Three,
Who wrought the plan so that I live,
Drawn in eternity.

The Father chose, the Son redeem'd,
The Spirit seals with blood;
Its altogether fitly framed,
Done by the Triune God.

There's nothing can be added to,
Or ought be took away;
There's nothing less for me will do,
To stand the trying day.

To see by faith I have a part,
In such a deed as this,
And feel a tender broken heart,—
How sweet the season is.

To know there's nothing e'er can come—
Can break this bond of love.
Ah! death, I only shall go home
To dwell with him above.

J. G.

THE
GOSPEL STANDARD,
OR,
FEEBLE CHRISTIAN'S SUPPORT.

"Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness; for they shall be filled."—Matt. v. 6.

"Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began."—2 Tim. i. 9.

"The election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded."—Rom. xi. 7.

"If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest.—And they went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch; and he baptized him.—In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost."—Acts viii. 37, 38; Matt. xxviii. 19.

No. 96. DECEMBER, 1843. VOL. IX.

"GREAT IS THE MYSTERY OF GODLINESS."

My dear Friend in the glorious Head of Zion, the Lord the Lamb, the Lord of life and glory,—“Wonder, O heavens! and be astonished, O earth!” that sinners like you and me should be one in and with this blessed Christ, bone of his bone, body of his body, and flesh of his flesh, and, by the indescribable power and energy of the Holy Ghost, made partakers of his Spirit! This is grace indeed! The Lord of life, whom we have insulted in thousands of instances, took our nature into union with his Godhead, that He might come down to us, and enter into the indescribable miseries that our awful insults had merited at the hands of Justice:

“The law demanded blood for blood,
And out he let his vital flood,
And paid the mortal debt.”

The Lord of life and glory, that he might enter meritoriously and sympathetically into our case and circumstances, and suit himself to our low and vile condition, condescended to become a worm, (Ps. xxii. 6,) a Man of sorrows, despised and rejected of men, and his chief acquaintance grief. (Isa. liii. 3.) Who can enter feelingly into the solemn poverty, weakness, and low condition of the matchlessly despised Man Jesus? Let faith attempt to trace him through all the wonders of his condescension, without a home, or a sympathizing friend upon earth that dared to own him in his deep distress, and then view him as the Lord of life and glory, and we shall find that we are lost in a deep profound. Such is our condition, that we stand in need of the despised Man of sorrows as much as we do of

the glorious Lord of life; nor could our case be fully entered into without both, and both meeting in one person, the God-Man. This is the pillar and ground of the truth, and, without controversy, "Great is the mystery of godliness; God was manifest in the flesh." This, my dear friend, is the pillar and ground of our hope. It was a solemn act for God to take our nature (without sin) into union with his Godhead; and the glorious and solemn work accomplished in that nature can never be described by men nor angels. These are the things which angels desire to look into. (1 Peter i. 12.) Now and then we have a little peep into some of these blessed things, and sweet work it is when we can sit at the feet of Jesus, and enjoy a glimpse of his glory and humility at the same time; the world then drops its charms, and we desire to stay there, and gaze upon the glories of Christ until we die. But we must quit this world before we can enter into the gloriously profound depths of this mystery. But, my dear friend, one glimpse of the glory of Christ is a sure pledge that he is ours and that we are his:

"Did Jesus once upon me shine?
Then Jesus is for ever mine."

I have of late had some solemn views and feelings of the humble, sorrowful Man Jesus, in union with his glorious Godhead, as my Lord, my Life, my Jesus, my Head, and my Glory. There is something very sweet and endearing in being enabled to approach him as the Man Jesus, and by faith to view him in his various trials, and sorrows, and solemn sufferings, as my Representative and Head. We often talk of his glorious power, and a blessed subject it is both to think and to talk of, and to feel; but there is at the same time something amazingly familiar to have a spiritual view of his weakness as a worm. To see Christ in his worm-like weakness, combined with his God-like power, and all its glorious connections, is in very deed the great mystery of godliness. The Lord grant that both you and I, and the dear family of God at large, may more and more enter into this solemn subject.

Give my love to your minister and all friends; and may the Lord be with you, and bless you with much sweet intercourse with God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost; and may both the sufferings and glory of Christ be your daily meditation.

That you may live by faith in Christ, and derive fresh supplies from him, and that in all things you may glorify Christ, is the prayer of,
Yours in the Lord,

February, 1836.

W. G.

THE LIFE OF FAITH.

Dear Madam,—The life of faith, joy, and peace, and a heartfelt union with the dear Redeemer as the blessed effect of eternal love, and the doctrine of eternal election in Christ, the Rock of Ages, from whence these soul-satisfying streams perpetually flow, are my favourite themes. And as you are not insensible of the value of these unmerited mercies of God, nor of the assurance and security

which they afford to an enlightened mind, I do not know that I can entertain you with a more interesting subject.

This life of faith is a familiarity and a divine correspondence, carried on between the Most High God and a redeemed soul, by which the mind is ennobled, the understanding enriched with the knowledge of heavenly treasures, and the affections inflamed with a fervent love to the Father of all mercies. Faith is a fruit of God's Spirit, begotten on the mind by the Holy Ghost: "For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world; and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith." It is called "the faith of God's elect," because it is peculiar to them: "As many as were ordained to eternal life believed." It is called "the faith of the operation of the Holy Ghost," because it is brought forth under his prolific operations. It is a divine and unshaken persuasion of the reality of a divine report deeply impressed on the mind of man; and it is the result of an eternal union which subsisted between Christ and the elect from everlasting, the bond of which union is God's everlasting love to Christ, and to his elect in him. Thus, faith firmly credits a divine testimony, and makes the happy possessor most assuredly know that he is an heir of all the blessing testified of. Faith is an eye, and sees the wonderful works of God, both in grace and in providence; yea, she pries into his eternal counsel, and at times sees Him who is invisible. All the ancient saints saw the promised seed at a distance, and spake of him as present, and the blessed effects of every vision justified the prediction. This proves their life to be a life of dependence on God. They conversed with him in his promises; their expectations were employed in looking out for the fulfilment of them, and patience waited for the issue; and after they had endured a while they inherited the promises. Faith is an undoubted persuasion, that fetches in the blessings couched in the promises, and applies them to the renewed and heavenly mind. Faith doth the same kind office to the soul that the hand doth to the body, for it lays hold on eternal life, and realizes the promises with such a firm assurance of their full and final accomplishment, as to quicken and enliven every power of the elect soul, and make it joyful in hope of the glory of God. Faith eyes the obedience of the Saviour, and applies it to the disquieted conscience, and is attended with the internal witness of the Holy Ghost, assuring the conscience of the sinner that Jesus is his eternal righteousness before the throne of God, while peace from the atonement made by the great Mediator sweetly flows in, as a proof that the Most High God is satisfied, and the sword of Justice sheathed in the Son of God. O mysterious Scabbard! Thus, Madam, this long and needful war between God and the sensible sinner is ended, and eternal peace proclaimed to all believers. Faith eyes the atoning blood of the Surety, and a multiplication of pardons are produced therefrom, which faith applies; and thus she purifies the heart from all the filth or guilt daily contracted through our manifold infirmities. And to maintain life in her beloved habitation, she leads her possessor to a throne of grace, and there begs the bread of heaven, and does her office in attending every good petition

she claims her privileges in her own country, and her freedom in her own city; she will take no denial at a throne of grace, nor will her Father deny her suit. Faith in us is of high extraction; God ordained her, Christ possesses her, and the Holy Ghost produces her. God has greatly honoured faith, and it is certain she will never dishonour him. By her allowed fortitude and importunity, she glorifies her Father, and her Father will ever honour her. She keeps house at the expense of the Saviour, and fetches all her food from afar. She, being of a divine origin, will exist for ever. In the church militant faith is both the eye and the hand of the soul, but in the church triumphant she will be only an eye. Divine light can never be extinguished. Faith despises all human inventions and human assistance, and ceases to act when carnal wisdom is invited to take the reins of government, but always accomplishes the decreed and the desired end, after fleshly sufficiency has left us exposed to ridicule. Faith, if she is let alone, will make her despicable habitation stand firm against all assaults; for she establishes her house on a Rock; she will lead her armies on through the most formidable host of opposers, for none overcome the world but believers. In short, that man is eternally rich who has her, for God is his portion, and this he freely declares before every adversary; as it is written: "Rich in faith." He stands firm indeed whom she establishes; and he is sure to hold on his way if she leads him in the path. Every fallen countenance that appears in a persecutor is an indication of a conquest made on the adversary, either to reduce him to the sceptre of Christ, or leave him to the judgment of God. Faith can blunt the edge of a sword, disarm a flame of its force, stop the mouth of a voracious lion, and make a devil fly to his cave. God himself is her shield, and she is the honourable and victorious hand that wields it. Our wealth, honour, success, victory, safety, and eternal security lie in the possession of her.

The Lord increase thy faith, while I remain, dear madam, thy willing servant in the Lord,

Winchester-Row, May 4th, 1784.

W. HUNTINGTON.

**"CAST ALL YOUR CARE UPON HIM, FOR HE
CARETH FOR YOU."**

My very dear Brother in the Lord,—You wished to know how I felt last Lord's day, when I was enabled to add my feeble testimony to the cause of God and truth by being baptized. I felt rather low in the morning, but, at the chapel, my soul was blessedly led to feast on the sweet truths there delivered, and especially when our dear pastor brought forward that sweet portion of God's word, "Cast all your care upon him for he careth for you." And, bless the name of the Lord, he enabled me to cast all my cares and fears upon him, being fully assured that he cared for me. It is a very dear mercy when we can see and feel, in our very hearts, that the Lord cares for us. My soul was led to beg of the dear Lord, if it were his blessed will, that he would open my mouth to sing and speak his

praises at the water, and make it manifest to me that I was not deceived; and, bless his dear name, he did so, I do believe in my very soul, for I had such a sweet feeling sense of his precious love towards me, that my soul was constrained to bless him for all his great mercies to me. O, if I had had ten thousand tongues, they would have been too little to speak his praises, for I felt as if I could not speak either fast enough or loud enough, in his presence who had done such wonderful things for my poor soul. I felt a solid peace of mind which the world can neither give nor take away, and I was enabled not to mind the mocks or scoffs of the assembled multitude. It was nothing to me, for I could say, with one of old, "None of these things move me." Ah! my friend; I would not have been absent for worlds. It did not seem a cross to me, for the love of God so warmed my heart that all things appeared easy for a time. I remember the time when baptism seemed a very heavy cross to my flesh, and I shunned it as long as I dared, but, bless the dear name of the Lord, he overcame all my doubts and fears. I did not take the least cold, neither at the time did I fear it, for the Lord took away all my fears, so that my soul was constrained to say, "Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me, bless his holy name." It is my most sincere wish, if it be the Lord's blessed will, that more of his children may be led to follow in the steps of our dear Redeemer, who says, "If ye love me, keep my commandments. And he that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me; and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself unto him." O what a gracious promise this is for poor sin-sick souls! And we know that he will also perform it, because he is able and willing to save all that come unto God by him, for none ever will be willing until God the eternal Spirit makes them willing. O what a mercy that ever he should cause me to hear the precious sound of his glorious gospel! My greatest grief now is, that I cannot love Christ more, who has been so kind and gracious to vile unworthy me. Bless the dear name of the Lord, he is indeed kind to me. When I returned home, on the Monday evening, and retired to my bed-room, the Lord blessed me with a nearness of access to him, and a sweetness in prayer which I never before experienced, and I was constrained to cry out, "Bless the Lord, O my soul." When I arose in the morning the feeling was still present with me, and that sweet hymn came with much power and blessedness to my mind:

"Alas! and did my Saviour bleed?
And did my Sovereign die?
Would he devote his sacred head
For such a worm as I?"

Through the tender mercy of God, I was enabled to see and feel that Christ had died for sinful me, and I have had such a sweet sense of the pardoning love of God, in and through Christ Jesus, during the past week, that I can truly say I have felt that peace which the world can neither give nor take away. May God give me a more thankful heart. O, let me have an interest in your prayers, that I

may be kept, by the mighty power of God, through faith, unto salvation. Please to give my kindest love to Mr. and Mrs. W—, when you see them, and all that love and fear God, and accept the same yourself from your affectionate sister in the bonds of the ever-blessed gospel of Jesus Christ.

July 9th, 1843.

E. A.

A WORD TO THE SENT SERVANTS OF GOD.

'To the Ministers of the word in England a Minister sendeth greeting.

Dear Brethren,—When we are led into the scriptures by the Spirit we are led to see how far custom has prevailed, through the long reign of Antichrist, to eclipse the glory of the gospel dispensation; and nothing short of the breaking forth again of the Sun of Righteousness can restore that glory to Mount Zion and her inhabitants. The formalities in preaching, *the burial of the dead*, church discipline, disputed doctrines, and a variety of other things, exhibit a great deal of that carnality which has been ushered in by the man of sin, and of which, at present, the church can hardly divest herself.

The preached word, for instance. What means all that premeditation, *selection of texts*, *division of subjects*, committing the order to memory, studying not to offend the outward ear, and many other evils, which are practised by some of the best ministers our country can afford? These systems evidently never had an existence but with Antichrist, and they convince us that, as we are under the necessity of adopting these things, we are at a distance from the promise that the salvation of Zion should go forth as brightness, and as a lamp that burneth. (Isa. lxii. 1.) I say, then, that to preach the word, we must be in possession of the word, as our Lord says, "He that believeth on me, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water;" and water flowing upon the thirsty ground needs not much dividing in its streams to find the low ground.

I believe that in every place where the words preach, preaching, or the like occur in the book of God, they imply a report given (Isa. liii. 1) of things certainly known as the preacher's own, as "*our report*," "*our gospel*," (2 Cor. iv. 3,) "*the weapons of our warfare*." So that it is something that the persons thus engaged are put in the possession of for an express purpose, the exercise of which depends entirely upon the acting agency of Him that putteth the same in trust. Paul declareth, "I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth." (Rom. i. 16.) In 1 Peter i. 12 it is called preaching "the gospel by the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven."

To preach the gospel, then, we must be filled with the gospel; so that whether we will or not, we must discharge ourselves of the rich contents of the blessed news of salvation to sinners. Paul says, "Woe is me if I preach not the gospel." The disciples would have returned to their fishing if they had not been as bottles filled with new wine, for they evidently thought more of their literal nets than

their spiritual ones. As preaching is a pouring out of that which is poured in, until we can prove that the Holy Ghost pours it in by *divisions and sub-divisions*, we have no authority so to pour it out. But as we are driven to Romish crutches, it is an evidence of our lameness; and as the Scriptures declare that according to our faith so it shall be unto us, it is clear that we are lacking faith in this matter.

I have been a public preacher of the word about three years, and I have been more pestered about the right way of administration of the same than almost any thing else upon the subject. It has been my earnest prayer to God that he would direct me aright in this matter, and I have ever found my sweetest seasons, and the most profitable and refreshing moments to the people, when my mind has been the least entangled by formalities. But it is very difficult for me to get rid of this practice, which proves to me my want of faith. Sometimes, in the early part of the week, I have some sweet movements, which I endeavour to hide until the Lord's day, but, like the manna, it generally breeds worms before that time comes. If I have a text, I cannot, though I would, help putting the tool upon God's altar; but if I have no text, I can oftentimes commit myself prayerfully to God, and then I have comfortable liberty; and when this is not the case, which frequently happens, I am ashamed and confounded before the people. This is the effect of pride and vain glory. In fact, I find no certain rule, therefore I am convinced that it is a time of drouth with the church. And although those of God's ministers who are possessed of gifts and abilities for the work (which I am not) may clear the ground better to the ear of a mortal, they cannot, nevertheless, feel satisfied without power. Like Nehemiah and his companions, we have reason to lift up our voice to Him that sitteth in the heavens; and as "we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ," let us study to serve him with the ability which he has given us; and as we preach to others that they should "stand still and see the salvation of the Lord," may we be enabled to stand still also.

September, 1842.

G. M.

[Though we approve of much that is contained in the above piece, yet we cannot fully agree with all the remarks in it, more especially with what is said about "*divisions and sub-divisions*" in preached sermons, and the objection made to *the burial of the dead*; which parts we have marked in italics. These, therefore, seem to call for a few remarks from us.

Ministers of the gospel do not stand exactly in the same position as the apostles; so that we cannot institute a complete comparison between them. The apostles preached a *new revelation*; they were witnesses of the resurrection of Jesus Christ; and to them was entrusted the proclamation of the cross, and all the doctrines and experience connected with it. But ministers of the gospel, since their days, proclaim no *new* truths. That is not their office. Their commission and work is to interpret and expound the *revelation that has been given* by the Holy Ghost in the Scriptures, just so far as they are led experimentally into it. Hence results the use of texts. As *the whole* of the mind of God in the Scriptures of truth cannot be expounded at a time, a part is taken; and what better or more convenient way can be adopted than to speak from such a part of the Scriptures, (in other words, a *text*,) wherein that part of revealed truth is contained? This will usually be a subject. And as clearness of state-

ment is essential to a right understanding of a subject, and as distinctness is essential to clearness, we come at once to a division of the subject into distinct branches. We thus arrive at divisions in the following order. Preaching is, to a certain extent, an exposition or interpretation of God's word; clearness is indispensable to this exposition being properly understood; distinctness and keeping separate the different branches of a subject are necessary for clearness; and division is more or less necessary to distinctness. In order to illustrate our meaning, suppose a preacher is led to interpret the mind of God in those words, "The desire of the righteous shall be granted," would he not succeed better if he were to show, under distinct heads, *who* were the righteous, *what* they desired, and *how* their desires were granted, than if he confused together these distinct branches? Say that a poor soul wished to know if *he* were one of these "righteous," would he not be more likely to have that made known by hearing the character of the righteous traced out distinctly from the other parts of the text? Or say that he wished to know if *his* desires were the desires of the righteous, would not the comparison be plainer and clearer by hearing these desires explained, or contrasted with false desires, equally distinct from the other parts of the subject? And so with the *granting* of them, would not this be more clearly explained under a distinct head than confused with the other two?

There may be, and doubtless is, a formality in thus dividing a text; but is not more gained than lost thereby? A certain degree of form is absolutely necessary to carry on the worship of God. The ordinances cannot be administered without some degree of form. But is not this far better than confusion? And if God is not the God of confusion, but of order, why should the Spirit be the author of a confused sermon rather than of a clear one? And if divisions prevent, as far as man can prevent, confusion, why should we think a larger measure of the Spirit would sweep all divisions away? Form is one thing, and formality is another. If possible, let us have one without the other. Thus we would wish to see formality avoided in divisions of texts; but we fear, were the form given up, we should hear from most but confused harangues and endless repetitions.

And we think there is a way of taking up the different branches of a subject in a clear and distinct order, without always or necessarily announcing a *First*, *Secondly*, or *Thirdly*. The text itself will be sometimes divided into clauses as it stands, which may afford a convenient division; or the words, if a short one, separately explained and spoken from, will afford another; or a summary at the end will throw the divisions to a different part of the discourse. But we think that to give up all divisions, under the idea that he is to speak what first comes uppermost, would tend little to the minister's comfort, or to the people's edification. Nor can we perceive anything unscriptural or antichristian in *the burial of the dead*. Abraham buried Sarah, and "devout men carried Stephen to his burial, and made great lamentation over him." When members of gospel churches die they must be buried; and is it not more consistent that their pastor should inter them in the chapel-yard, where such a privilege exists, in the fear of the Lord, than that their remains should be committed to the earth in all the mummery of a carnal system, and by a dead minister, in the parish church-yard? Surely it is far better to be consistent throughout; and if we are Dissenters, from a living fear of God in our conscience, let us be so in death as in life; and consider it a mercy that our bodies should not lie within the precincts of a Building, upon which we have turned our back, but near the Place where we have been accustomed to assemble with the saints in the name and fear of the Lord.—Eds.]

A BRIGHT SPOT.

Messrs. Editors,—Since I last had the pleasure of your notice, the dear Lord, in his infinite mercy and goodness, has been pleased a time or two to favour me with a transitory glimpse of the bright side of the picture, and certainly, though those occasions have been

"few, and far between," and of very brief duration, they have, nevertheless, left a very precious remembrance of them behind. I had for a considerable length of time been (as I sometimes compared myself) like a shipwrecked seaman, who has been long exposed to the fury of the two elements, wind and water, with nothing to bear him up on the surface of the rolling billows but a few spars and planks rudely lashed together, when neither sun nor stars have appeared, whereby he might have obtained some clue to where he was drifting; until suddenly a friendly bark has hove in sight, and picked up the poor buffeted mariner. So, spiritually, with myself; I had long been tossed up and down on the unsettled sea of harassing doubts, perplexing fears, and distrustful apprehensions, and had been blown to and fro by the Euroclydon wind of temptation, while, like Job, I hoped and waited for the dawning of the day; but, to my distress and misery, there was neither dawning of the day, rising of the sun, nor appearance of the stars, whereby I might have ascertained whether I was in the right way or not. I had, as I trusted, sometimes been favoured with a few signs, testimonies, and evidences that the Lord had begun the good work; (Phil. i. 6;) such as a little melting down of soul; nearness of access at a throne of grace; a spirit of tenderness towards, and affection for, the Lord's people; answers to prayer; a deliverance in a time of spiritual or temporal trouble; a moment of sweet communion with the Lord; a feeling of joy and solid satisfaction in walking in and according to the ordinances of his house, and the ministration of his word; a little light on, and life in the perusal of his word, when it was sweet as honey or the honey-comb to my taste; but all these things, which I had esteemed as evidences, tokens of good, and stones of help, and as so many manifestations of the Lord's favour, and proofs of his having planted the seed of life within, were all eclipsed, enveloped, and beclouded in the universal darkness of unbelief and distrustfulness. All had disappeared and vanished away like smoke. I found that I was one of those who have changes. I doubted and questioned, over and over again, the truth or reality of what I had experienced. Whether the softenings and meltings down which I had had at a throne of grace were the genuine work of the Spirit in my heart, or whether they were only feelings of natural contrition; whether I had ever had an answer to prayer, which the enemy strove hard to convince me I had not, telling me at the same time that what I had considered as answers to my prayers were nothing more than mere events or occurrences, which would have taken place whether I had prayed or not, and that my deliverances, of a temporal and spiritual character; were simply links connected with the same chain of events; and that the light and joy which I had experienced were merely the effects resulting from a few sparks of my own kindling, and that my end would be according to the sentence pronounced against such, that I should "lie down in sorrow." These were a few of the insinuations of the enemy, but, bless the Lord, he has commanded these these winds to be still, and quieted the swelling waters.

But, as I observed at the beginning that the Lord has been pleased

to favour me with a passing view of the bright side of the picture, you will no doubt be a little concerned to know how it was, and in what that manifestation consisted. It was briefly as follows. I had, on one occasion, been for some weeks in a very agitated and distressed state of feeling, arising from the apprehension that, as I felt myself to be such a vile, sinful, and polluted creature, I never should obtain mercy, or inherit eternal life, but, on the contrary, should be punished with everlasting banishment from the presence of the Lord. From the fearful apprehension of this being my eternal destiny, I was in an inexpressible state of distress. Eternity, in its infinite duration, seemed ready to swallow me up, and, in my feelings, I appeared to be daily and hourly approaching nearer to it; when, at the very extremity of my distress, the Lord was pleased to break into my heart in a way which it is impossible for language to describe, but which, for a moment, appeared to raise my soul from hell to heaven. It seemed, if I may use the figure, like a drop of turpentine falling on a spark, so sudden was the flash of light, life, joy, and comfort, that appeared to diffuse itself through my heart, producing such a sensation of delight, that, in the experience of it, I could say with the poet,

"My willing soul would stay
In such a frame as this,
And sit and sing herself away,
To everlasting bliss."

In the remembrance of this, I sometimes feel a little particle of hope that, brief as was its duration, it was nevertheless a foretaste of that joy which is to be revealed, and an earnest of the inheritance which awaits the saints in light.

This was not the only visitation with which I was favoured; for, a short time after, the Lord was again pleased to cause his goodness to pass before me in the same precious manner as that which I have just endeavoured to describe. The next visitation (and the last which left an indelible impression behind it) was at a time when I had, for several months, been in a hard, fretful, and rebellious state of mind. I could obtain no access to a throne of grace; but, like Jeremiah, "when I cried and shouted" in the distress, bitterness, and anguish of my heart, the Lord seemed to shut out my prayer, and the heavens appeared as brass, and the earth as iron, against my petitions. I could obtain no joy or comfort in a perusal of the word, or in the hearing of the preached word; but I felt as hard, stubborn, and indifferent as the seat I sat on. Instead of bearing the word satisfactorily, I seemed (judging according to my feelings) to come away from the chapel more dejected, distressed, and miserable, than I was before I went into it. On this account, I came to the determination of going but once more. With this determination I went, and found that the person who was to preach was Mr. K—, of R—. I felt a little pleasure at this, as I had before heard him with joy and pleasure. I therefore anticipated that I should obtain something for my relief; for I could not give up all hopes, though I had become so desperate in my feelings. I listened, however, to the greater part of the sermon

without feeling the least touch or application of it to my heart, until the preacher made such an observation as this: "Perhaps," said he, "there may be some poor soul here who has been sorely harassed in his feelings concerning these things. He may say, 'They are very desirable and prizable things; but I fear that I shall never obtain the least of them. I sometimes *think* that if the Lord would grant the most earnest desire of my heart, and privilege me to partake of some of these great things, I should be the happiest creature alive, and that the world and all its wealth, in comparison with them, would be as nothing.' Well," he continued, "let us see if there is any mention made in the Lord's will of *thinkers*." He then quoted Mal. iii. 16: "Then they that feared the Lord spake one to another: and the Lord hearkened, and heard it; and a book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared the Lord, and that *thought* upon his name." During the quotation of these words, the simple monosyllable "*thought*" came with such power, sweetness, and preciousness to my heart, that I have not forgotten it from that moment to this, and I trust that I never shall. It acted like an electric shock, so suddenly did it come. I felt my heart immediately changed from a state of hardness and rebellion to softness, tenderness, and gratitude to the Lord for regarding and remembering even those who *think* upon his name.

Since that time, I have had many struggles with the enemy, as to the truth and genuineness of that enjoyment, which he endeavours hard to persuade and convince me was nothing more than a mere phantom of the brain, a mere shadow; and that I shall find, in the end, that not only what I then experienced, but all that I experienced before, was a delusion, from beginning to end. This, however, the Lord only knows.

But, fearing that I may be trespassing too much upon your valuable time and space, I desire to subscribe myself your sincere friend,

Manchester, August, 1842.

S. S.

HELPLESSNESS.

Dear Brother and Sister,—Yours, informing us of your safe arrival at W—, we received. An answer would have been returned before now, but failure of strength and languor of spirits have prevented. And not only so, but I am at times so dark in my understanding, so broken in judgment, so barren and contracted in heart, and altogether so deathly in my feelings, that I am at a loss to know whether I have one spark of life within or not, and often feel as destitute of love to God, or of a desire to love God, as destitute of love to his people, of love to his word, to his ways, to his ordinances, and to his dispensations, as if I were a stone. I sometimes feel that I could not think a good thought of, nor say a good word for God, if my soul's salvation depended on it. I go groping about like a blind man, and am desolate in my soul, being brimful of misery, enmity, and carnality, with my poor heart corroded with the cares of this life, perplexed and cast down, and all but a wreck. Sometimes, how-

ever, this accumulated wretchedness, bearing so heavily upon my spirit, causes me to groan, and to cry out, "Lord, I am oppressed, undertake for me;" and this text has at times come to my mind with some degree of power and sweetness: "When my heart is overwhelmed within me, lead me to the Rock that is higher than I." At other seasons my conscience is so loaded with guilt, that I go mourning, and sighing, and crying, heaping earth upon my head, and covering my loins with sackcloth, and sitting in ashes, being a companion of owls, and broken in the place of dragons, at an awful distance from God, enveloped in darkness and confusion, feeling too vile, too filthy, too detestable, abominable, and brutish to approach the footstool of a heart-searching, rein-trying, and omniscient God, not daring to open my mouth before him, nor to look up to the place where his Honour dwelleth. O what a wretch I feel myself to be! I often wonder how that great and glorious God, who dwelleth in the light which no man can approach unto, who is essentially holy, into whose eternal mind an evil thought, or the shadow of an evil thought, never found an entrance, who is above and beyond the possibility of sinning, and who hates sin with a perfect hatred,—I say, I often am amazed that he could have borne with me so long, and can still bear with me. Sometimes I think that his mercies are clean gone for ever, and that he will be favourable no more. O what a fearful, appalling contrast I feel there is between a pure, holy God and such a Gentile dog as I, when a ray of his holiness is revealed by the eternal Spirit to my heart! I sink down in the deepest abasement before him, crying out, "Unclean, unclean," and my soul thrills to its very core, under a solemn sense of his overpowering and burning purity, feeling something of that reverence, holy awe, and trembling before God which the prophet felt when he was favoured with a vision of the glory of God. At other seasons I see and feel the blood of sprinkling, and this melts down my heart like wax before the sun, and I then experience that melting contrition which no language can express.

I was thinking the other day what a mercy it is that the blood which once gushed out of the pierced side of Jesus Christ on Calvary for sinners should still retain its efficacy, speaking peace to the conscience every time it is applied, effecting a reconciliation to God, curing the sting of sin, imparting unutterable blessedness, and making the sinner's eyes like sluices, to weep at the cross of a crucified Saviour. Perhaps of all the seasons of blessedness, as a pardoned sinner, that I ever experienced, under the solemn, heart-glowing incoming of life and salvation to my "inward parts," those spent at Calvary have been the most solemn, the most endearing, and the most memorable, when by faith I have clasped to my blissful soul my bleeding, agonizing, loving, dying Lord. O how I at times long and pant for a sight of the cross! This is blessedness that the highest angel in glory never knew. Well might angels envy (could envy exist in their minds) the situation of a poor broken-hearted sinner in company with a bleeding Jesus. To feel, by precious faith, the blood of Christ drop into our souls is to have a fore-

taste of heaven; it is to feel a solemn knitting of heart, and soul, and mind to Jesus Christ; it is to grieve over our sins, which have caused his death; it is a drawing of life from his very heart; in a word, it is to have "fellowship with his sufferings," to weep and agonize with him. God grant unto thee, my brother, such solemnities as these.

"Blessed are they that mourn," said Jesus, "for they shall be comforted." The hungerings and thirstings felt by the new man of the heart, or, in other words, the breathings of that life which God, by his Spirit, has imparted to thy soul, my dear brother, shall be satisfied. May the Lord strengthen and increase thy hungerings and thirstings; aye, strengthen and increase them to such a degree, that thou mightest feel, under the mighty operations of the Holy Ghost, as if thy breast bone would cleave asunder, that thou mightest wrestle, and pray, and agonize with God for a dear communication of his tender mercies. This I can say with God and conscience on my side, that these things I have experienced; so that I do not write to you of what I know nothing about. I should like to have written a good deal more, but my paper is full, my time is expired, and my strength fails.

Drop me a line soon, and let me know how the work goes on within.—Yours very truly,

London, January 11, 1843.

P. R.

"THE DAYS OF DARKNESS SHALL BE MANY."

My dear Brother and Sister in the sweet and never-to-be-broken bonds of covenant mercy, in union with, and one in Jesus Christ, the church's everlasting Head and Husband, who so loved his bride, the Church, that (astonishing thought!) he gave, what? angels for it? no, but *himself*! that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water, by the word,—O! who is able to describe the blessedness of that poor sinner who is, in any measure, favoured with a knowledge of the deep things of God, which are foolishness to the natural man, and can be known by divine revelation only? for, saith Paul, "God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit."

I shall not attempt to say much in apologizing for my long neglect; but I must confess that I feel, in a measure, something like what I am made to feel in approaching a throne of grace after having shamefully neglected my Elder Brother; and this interrogation is forced upon my conscience: "Is this thy kindness to thy friend?" Yet one thing, and that only, I can say in excuse, namely, I have been waiting to see what God, in his gracious providence, might be pleased to do for me, hoping that I might be permitted to give you a more pleasing account than the last. But, my dear brother, I am still in the furnace: Nevertheless, I can sometimes say, before God, that I know that it is in very faithfulness that he hath afflicted me, not for his pleasure, but for our profit; and, in my soul, I have been led feelingly to ask him to continue to scourge

me as much and as long as he saw necessary, being sweetly persuaded that he was too wise to be mistaken, and too good to be unkind. But I find these sweet seasons to be very few, and the days of darkness many, very many. I am then shut up, and cannot come forth. I cry to the Lord; but he seems not to listen to my prayer; and I am made to learn this lesson over and over again, that when he shutteth, no man can open. Were it not that, as my Beloved, he sometimes opens to me, and admits me into his gracious presence, speaking a word of comfort to my poor fainting soul, "In the world ye shall have tribulation; but in me ye shall have peace; be of good cheer: I have overcome the world," I must sink beneath my burden. O how sweet it is, after long and tedious nights of darkness, gloom, and horror, to have the Day-Star again to visit one, and the Sun of Righteousness to arise on our poor souls with healing in his wings! To catch a glimpse of his lovely person is worth enduring a little suffering for; O! it is worth a thousand worlds! "O!" says my soul, "let him kiss me with the kisses of his mouth; for thy love is better than wine."

How does the Lord's cause go on at—? Is the Lord daily adding to your numbers such as shall be saved? I believe that it is a strange thing to hear of the conversion of one who is really and truly, in his feelings, cut down and killed by the law, and who sees, knows, and feels himself to be a poor, filthy, polluted, guilty wretch, not daring to lift up his eyes to heaven, but, like the poor publican, smiting on his breast, and crying, "God be merciful to me a sinner!"

What a mercy it is, my dear brother, to have a good beginning! I believe that most of the conversions of the present day begin in the flesh, and will assuredly end in the flesh. "Reprobate silver shall men call them; for the Lord hath rejected them." Nothing but pure gold and silver will stand the fiery scrutiny by which God is pleased to prove every son whom he loveth. "When he hath tried me," saith poor Job, "I shall come forth as gold." Even the Captain of our salvation was made perfect through sufferings. O how I long to be like him, in sweet submission to my Father's will! How sweetly does he invite his poor, fretting, kicking, murmuring, rebellious people! "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart; and ye shall find rest unto your souls; for my yoke is easy, and my burden is light." And, bless his dear name, I have proved the truth of it many times.

My wife joins in kindest love to you both. Pray for us. That you may be preserved, kept, upheld, strengthened, and comforted in all your trials, temptations, losses, crosses, and afflictions of every kind, is the sincere desire of my soul.

Your poor, tried brother, yet saved in Christ,

R. A.

OBITUARY.

Messrs. Editors,—I forward you a copy of some of my son's letters, with a brief account of his latter end. He was convinced of his awful state by nature about Christmas, 1842, and was then made fully aware of his own inability and unworthiness before God, and had an earnest desire to know his own interest in the Lord Jesus Christ.

My ever-dear Parents,—I have received yours of the 12th instant. It was quite an unexpected pleasure, having received one from you the day before. You cannot write too often. Your letters cheer my very soul. I know you will not cease to pray for me; for, at times, I cannot pray for myself, and I feel my heart so hard that nothing appears to reach it. My dear parents, how great is my ingratitude to that God who has prevented me from going to the place where hope never comes, which would only be a just reward for my innumerable sins! Yet there is something which can reach the hardest heart;

“And that dear *something* much I need.”

May I soon feel it applied with power to my ungrateful heart, and then I shall be happy!

Excuse this short epistle, and believe me, your affectionate son,

April 14th, 1843.

G. F. S.

My ever-dear Parents,—I have just received your welcome letter, and am happy to say that your prayers have not been in vain on my behalf; for my blessed Jesus has smiled upon me, which makes all my afflictions light. He says that he has loved me with an everlasting love; therefore, with lovingkindness he has drawn me. My hard heart is softened; so that I can feel what I read. O what a blessing! And I trust and pray that my brother Thomas may feel what I felt last night. It does me good to hear that he attends the means of grace regularly. Give my kind love to him, and tell him to take courage from me, a sinner so vile. It was for such poor sinners as he and I are that Christ shed his precious blood. One smile from my dear Lord is worth millions of worlds.

My health is very bad, and my cough also. Give my love to my uncle and aunt, and inform them that I can say that it is good for me to be afflicted.

With kind love to all, I remain, your affectionate son,

Hanham, April 29th, 1843.

G. F. S.

My ever-dear Parents,—I have just returned home, and feel very poorly and unusually low. I thought that I should never recover; but my blessed Jesus was pleased to smile upon me, and made me feel that my sins, though many, are all forgiven; which has melted me down with overwhelming tears of joy. He said, “Blessed are they that mourn; for they shall be comforted;” and he has comforted me. Bless his holy name for afflicting me!

“My Jesus has done all things well.”

Yes, when Jesus smiles, it is a little heaven below. O! I cannot express what I feel. Pray for me, that I may be kept with the sweetness of his smiles. I feel a gratitude that I never felt before. Pray for me, that I may often feel the same. I feel that I am a brand plucked from the burning. Pray that I may never prove to be an hypocrite. Did you feel in this way when the Lord first shone upon your soul? If so, that would be a satisfaction to me. O how I do wish you were here to talk to me! I feel no pain of body now. O! to be in fellowship with our dear Jesus! I felt almost more than I could bear. I shed tears of unspeakable joy. God pardon a sinner so vile! O bless and praise his holy name for his wonderful kindness unto me, the vilest of the vile. I feel that this passage belongs to me: "Be of good comfort: your sins, though many, are all forgiven you." I can praise God with my whole heart and soul; and I do wish that you were here to help me. I feel overwhelmed with joy.

With love to all, I remain, your affectionate son, and a brand plucked from the burning,

Hanham, April 30th, 1843.

GEORGE.

In July, 1843, he was so ill that it was necessary to fetch him home. He continued to grow worse; and on Monday, August 14th, he remained in his bed. He said, "My dear father, I feel very dark in my soul. I want a smile from Jesus." I replied, "The enemy is making his last attack upon you; but what a mercy it is that though he can distress, he cannot destroy one of God's children." He said, "I hope that I am not deceived." I answered, "I am sure that you are not."

'Did Jesus once upon thee shine?
Then Jesus is for ever thine.'

I reminded him of some of his letters, in which he mentioned the shining of the Lord upon his soul, and that he was a brand plucked from the burning. He said, "O, yes, he is my Jesus! O, father, tell me about the love of Christ!" I answered, "My dear George, I feel much the want of that love myself; but what a mercy it is that his love is unchangeable!"

After a short time, the dark clouds gradually withdrew, and a calm solemnity followed. His brother and sister came to see him; and the Lord gave him his request in restoring to him his voice, which had left him for some time previously. He said to them, "You will soon be where I am—on a dying bed. I shall soon be a lifeless lump of clay; and I feel truly glad that the Lord has given me my voice, to tell poor sinners what a supporting, delivering God I have found. And now I

'Point to the Lamb's redeeming blood,
And say, Behold your way to God!'

They wept much. He said, "Weep not for me, but for yourselves." He requested his mother, who was ill in the adjoining room, to be brought to him. He clasped her hand with all the strength he had, and, smiling, said, "My dear mother, I am only going a little before you. You will soon follow after me; and then we shall meet to part

no more for ever. When I am dead, be sure not to grieve; but praise God for his merciful dealings with me.—O, father, what a mercy it is that I have such a father to pray with me, and to talk with me about the love of Christ!" Being quite exhausted, he dozed for a time. And when he awoke, he was again tempted by Satan. I said, "Satan is aware that the Lord is taking you to himself; but I am sure that the Lord will again bless you with his presence." And surely the Lord did bless him. He was blessed with the love of Christ, and spoke sweetly of it. He said,

"Yes, I shall soon be landed
On sacred shores of bliss,
With all my powers expanded,
And dwell where Jesus is."

His brother W. H. S. came to see him. He said, "O it is an awful thing to come to a death-bed without vital godliness in the heart! I shall die in a few hours, and with that religion with which I have lived. Never rest satisfied with a fly-away religion. You must be born again; and remember that it is religion which must give 'sweetest pleasures while we live,' and which must supply 'solid comforts when we die.'"

On August 15th he was happy in his soul, longing to depart, to be with Christ. He said,

"Weary of earth, myself, and sin,
Dear Jesus, set me free;
And to thy glory take me in;
For there I long to be."

He often expressed a strong desire to go through the ordinance of baptism. I told him that, in his case, the Lord would accept the will for the deed. He said, "Yes, but it is a divine command; and I should be glad to follow the Lord's command." His uncle T. S. having come to see him, he said, "Uncle, I am going home. I shall soon be with my dear Jesus." His uncle said, "The Lord makes dying beds as soft as downy pillows are." He replied, "I am a living witness of it; for he has made mine so." He wished his uncle to pray with him, who did so with much solemnity, which gave him great pleasure. After having slept a little, he said, "The Lord of Hosts is with me; the God of Jacob is my refuge; and a blessed refuge from all storms he is; and we will crown him Lord of all." I said, "What hath God wrought for my dear George?" He answered, "Why, he has brought me out of the horrible pit and the miry clay, and set my feet upon the Rock, Christ, against whom the gates of hell can never prevail.

"I can do nothing without thee:
Make haste, my God, make haste!"

I want to be at home."

On August 16th he said, "O, father, how mercifully the Lord deals with me! The enemy is kept at a long distance from me." I observed, "That is another answer to prayer. You have often heard me pray that he might be kept from you." He answered, "O, yes, I have; and surely the Lord deals very mercifully with me."

On August 17th he presented his pocket Testament to his brother T. S., and earnestly besought the Lord to make it a blessing to him. He became much weaker, and said, "O, my dear father, what a mercy it is that the Lord should smile on such a worthless sinner as I feel that I am, and shed his precious blood for me!"

'There is a fountain fill'd with blood,
Drawn from Emanuel's veins;
And sinners plunged beneath that flood
Lose all their guilty stains.

'E'er since, by faith, I saw the stream
Thy flowing wounds supply,
Redeeming love has been my theme,
And shall be till I die.'

'I go to that eternal rest;
For there I long to be.'

A deep sense of his own unworthiness was evidently marked in all his conversation. He made every arrangement for his funeral with all the composure imaginable. He said,

"'Grace taught my soul to pray,
And pardoning love to know;
'Twas grace that kept me to this day,
And will not let me go.'

And joyfully, with all the strength I have, my young lips shall sing,

'Where's thy victory, boasting Grave?
And where's the monster's sting?"

Yes,

'If sin be pardon'd, I'm secure:
Death has no sting beside:
The law gave sin its damning power;
And Christ my ransom died."

On the 18th of August he wished to see his mother once more. He said, "Mother, I feel very poorly. It will soon be over." She said, "Yes, my dear child, you will soon be with your dear Jesus, where sorrow and sighing will be for ever done away." He said, "Bless you! Farewell." He wished to see his brother, and said, "Be a good boy to your father and mother; and the Lord bless you! Farewell." His wife was sent for. He said to her, "Remember that you must be born again, and that I die a sinner saved by sovereign grace, and a Baptist." He then said, "Father, you pray, and I will pray." And thus died G. F. S., August 18th, 1843, aged 21 years.

EDITORS' REVIEW.

The Lawful Captive Delivered. By James Osbourn, Minister of the Gospel in the City of Baltimore. Baltimore, 1835.

(Concluded from page 351.)

We left our Author under a dark and heavy cloud, but through which some faint gleams and rays were discernible. He was not a hardened backslider: the finger of God was upon his conscience; and he could say with Ephraim, (Jer. xxxi. 19.) "Surely, after that I was turned, I repented; and after that I was instructed, I smote

upon my thigh; I was ashamed, yea, even confounded, because I did bear the reproach of my youth." He was taught by most painful experience what an evil and bitter thing it was to have forsaken the right ways of the Lord. There was no attempt at self-justification when the Lord laid the guilt of backsliding upon his conscience, no light ribaldry about "falling forward," no quibbling about the old man and the new, no packing all the blame upon Satan, no mystification of texts or Scripture phrases, in a word, no Antinomian evasions to harden and stupify the heart. The fear of God in a tender conscience mercifully prevented James Osbourn from falling into such snares. He had to suffer long and deeply before the Lord restored to him the joys of his salvation. Had we found him, instead of groaning and sighing, cavilling and quibbling in the manner alluded to, we should have been tempted to treat his work as King Jehoiakim treated the roll, when, after reading three or four leaves, he cut it with the penknife, and cast it into the fire that was upon the hearth. (Jer. xxxvi. 23.)

We resume, therefore, the narrative at this point:

"But, for the present, I was all in the dark, and at a sad uncertainty about the most important points. But O! with what vehemence desires did my soul at times go out after the Lord of Hosts, even that Lord from whom I had wandered so far, and sinned against in so cruel a manner! I was constant in my visits into the fields and woods, about three or four miles out of the city; and how often I have there, on my knees, told the tale of woe, confessed my sins, and begged pardon, none but God knows. But true it is, I was there once made to taste and see what a bitter and an evil thing sin is, and how it can harden the heart, and benumb the conscience, and separate between God and the soul. I had tasted something of this before now, even when I was first convinced of my lost and undone state, as is related in the second and third part of this work: but never did I see those lengths and depths of sin in my heart as now I saw them. I saw and felt my very inside to be a sink of iniquity, a wretched mass of filth, and a haunt for devils. No mortal that I had ever seen or heard of appeared to me half so filthy as I was. From head to foot I was unclean."

Whilst in this gloomy and desponding state of soul, the Lord mercifully gave him some intimation of better days:

"Well, one day as I was out in the lonesome fields, mourning over my unhappy state, and having no prospects of better times, but getting, as I thought, worse and worse, and more and more dark in my mind, and shut up in soul, and every thing around me as gloomy as death, and I just ready to sink down beneath my load, the Lord did so far appear for my help, and shine so sweetly into my soul, that I was melted down into love and thankfulness, and was truly happy and quite satisfied that the Lord was yet on my side. Yea, I was more astonished at this manifestation of love to me than I am able to tell of. For a while, my soul, my thoughts, and all my affections seemed to be in heaven. This was a most blessed visit, and a good pledge of greater and better days to come; and I did think now that the Lord had assured me that the thoughts of his heart towards me were thoughts of peace, and not of evil."

But this visit, though sweet, was short; and in order to teach him how low he had sunk, and how impossible it was for him to rise unless the Lord himself lifted him up, he had still to chew the bitter cud of reflection:

"Ah! I would think, I may thank myself for all this great and sore trouble

under which I have suffered for so long a time. My sins and rebellion have brought on me what I now feel. I would to God I had died instead of sinned. But I have sinned, and greatly sinned too. I have been almost or quite a deist, and have disliked the Bible, and wished there was no religion, nor any hereafter; but now I want to find comfort in the Bible, but there is none for me; and I want to find religion, but I cannot."

We have thought it right to give these extracts, (which indeed form but a very small portion of the account he has given of his grief and sorrow,) in order to show that with him recovery from a state of backsliding was no smooth and easy process, that he was not brought out of it *doctrinally*, or leaped from despondency into assurance and from guilt into pardon, merely because he saw in the Scriptures that the church is complete in Christ, when there were seven abominations in his heart.

But we pass on to his happy deliverance from his gloom and despondency:

"I continued to get more and more dark in mind and burdened in soul, so that I knew not what course I should steer. But on the morning of the twenty-sixth of December, 1813, it being the first day of the week, I concluded I would once more go into the woods and hide myself, not from the wrath of God, but from the face of mortals, that my opportunity might be better to groan out my deep distress before God, as I had often done before. Snow at this time was on the ground, but I ventured on some little distance beyond the old French tan yard, and found a prodigious thicket, formed of briars and thorns, and various kinds of prickly under-growth, reaching above my head, and on the ground thickly standing. Among those things I crept, and sat me down by the side of a huge pile of rocks, and read my Bible, and then meditated, and then prayed, and then read again, and thought much of what I was reading; and I read Psalm after Psalm with my mind full of cogitation, till the Lord broke forth upon me with his glorious light, the light of the Gospel, which shone so bright and clear, and was so warm and healing, and brought with it such divine demonstration, and set Christ before me as my Saviour with so much certainty, that my soul seemed as if it was inwrapped in beams of glory. At last, my burden, and guilt, and bondage, and darkness, and fears, and jealousies, were all as clean removed from my mind and conscience, as if they had never been there.

"At this sudden but pleasing change, I rejoiced and wept while there before the Lord, and was so amazed at all things which had happened unto me, that the place where I was looked like another place to what it did when I entered into the thicket. My soul melted down before God, and praises filled my tongue, but not so as to be heard with mortal ears, but, inwardly, I sang praises to the Lord, and was as happy as I wanted to be. I was so overmuch surprised at this event, that I had not proper command of myself, nor knew I what to think, or what to say, or how to address my Almighty Deliverer. I was all praise and full of gladness; my cup ran over, and I really had more than heart could wish or tongue express, "unspeakable and full of glory." I still continued in the thicket praising God, and saying,

"Dear Jesus! Precious Saviour! Blessed be the Lord for ever! What shall I render unto my Maker for all this! My sins are all gone, my burden is removed, my fears are scattered, my accusers are fled, my darkness is banished; my Redeemer is come, the year of jubilee is at hand, and I am pardoned, and blest, and accepted in the Beloved."

This was no transient visit, still less a doctrinal deliverance, but the sweet commencement of restored communion. His deliverance was in the depth of winter, during the whole of which his consolations abounded:

"By and by the spring came on, and the weather was more pleasant, and my comforts continued as before, and my visits in the vicinity of the tanyard, three miles from the city, became uniform. I would most generally be out there by three o'clock in the morning, meditating and praying, or rather praising God, and also reading my Bible as soon as it was light enough. And how sweet was my communion and fellowship with Christ, and what gospel light and love was let into my soul, and what nearness of access to the Lord at a throne of grace, and how much divine comfort in reading the Holy Scriptures, I, in those days and in those sequestered places, felt and enjoyed in my soul, no mortal can tell unless he has felt and enjoyed the same himself. My familiarity with the Lord, and bold approaches to a throne of grace, and my views of the gospel, and of the whole plan of redemption, and of my own interest in all, and of the relationship between Christ and my soul, and the humility of mind and meekness of spirit, and the death to sin, to the world, to errors, and lies, were all as far beyond anything that I before had experienced, as the glare of the morning sun is beyond twilight. I speak conscientiously in this matter.

"Of a very truth, the Lord communed with my soul from his mercy-seat, (Exo. xxv. 22,) and shed glories all around, and gave me the water of life to drink; and I drank, and was satisfied. It has appeared to me sometimes as if the whole creation conspired to raise my song, and to fill me with heavenly wonder; and most marvellous things did I see, and feel, and taste, and handle of the word of life, (1 John i. 1,) which word was made flesh, and dwelt among us; and he was pleased to dwell with me also, and to give me ears to hear his voice in the gospel, and his promises; and, likewise, eyes to see 'his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father.' (John i. 14.) And under those discoveries, and most blessed and sweet indulgences, I have often found myself bathed in tears, and so astonished that I have known not what to say or think."

He was now, as we may readily conclude, delivered from those infidel temptations which had so long haunted him:

"Whereas, when I was in my backsliding state I was over-run with deism, and the Bible I was afraid to look at, and prayer I was not found in; but now I was as far removed from deism as a Deist is from divine truth; and the Bible was the most precious book that my eyes ever beheld, and prayer was my soul's delight. I lived in the constant practice of prayer, both by day and by night, in the house and in the fields. The Bible also I would read with my soul uplifted to God."

As far as the ministry of the word was concerned, his lot was cast in a barren land; but the Lord supplied that deficiency most abundantly by secret communications to his soul:

"Under preaching I could not get a crumb, no, not a crumb. To me the ministry was without either life, power, dew, warmth, or unction; and the view that I then had of the preaching, I choose here to conceal: but of a truth, in the clear light of the gospel, I evidently saw 'the nakedness of the land.' (Gen. xlii. 9.)

"But whenever I went to my *Patmos*, I found a feast of things, even savoury meat, such as I loved. (Isa. xxv. 6; Gen. xxvii. 4.) On some occasions when I have been out, I have been so exceedingly blest in my soul, and smiled on by my Saviour, that I have scarcely been able to bear up under the great glory revealed unto me. Most strangely was I indulged; so much so, that in some of my secret meditations, my soul hath been so wrapped up in glorious light, and so caught away from the things of time, that my situation hath appeared more like heaven than earth; and such surprising melting of heart and flowing of tears have attended the same, that it hath seemed as if I should dissolve, and die in the bosom of my Saviour. I have been frequently up all night long, with my soul as full of gospel peace and comfort as I well knew how to stand up under, and my *Patmos* has looked like the paradise of God, and praising, and blessing, and adoring my dear Redeemer, when walking or standing still, or

sitting down, or on my knees, hath been my sweet employment. I have wished that I could have done without any sleep at all, that I might have enjoyed the Lord without any surcease. This was a sweet text to me at one time when I was out, "Lo! this is our God; we have waited for him, and he will save us: this is the Lord, we have waited for him, we will be glad and rejoice in his salvation. (Isa. xxv. 9.)"

The following extract we give without any comment, merely observing that such things as are therein mentioned should not be too hastily condemned, nor too hastily received, but judged, not only by the weight due to the relater's testimony, but by the fruits and effects produced:

"As I on a Sunday morning was out in the fields, full of thought about the wonderful things which the Lord had wrought for me in the course of five or six months past, I, all on a sudden, was impressed with peculiar feelings concerning the advent of the Messiah, and the place where he first made his personal appearance. I then instantly turned myself round, and looked towards the rising sun, when something seemed to say, that there the Saviour of sinners was born: when all at once there appeared before the eyes of my understanding, Christ Jesus stretched on the cross, with his head somewhat reclining, and immortal love, most transcendently bright and glorious, suspended right over him as he hung; and at the foot of the cross, there appeared to me to be placed all my iniquities in one solid mass: at the same time the eyes of the Saviour were intensely fixed on me as I stood near the cross; and as he looked, he smiled with a smile peculiarly pleasant and expressive of his love and complacency towards me. I was now looking on the whole scenery with profound astonishment, and as I looked at the Saviour suffering on the cross, these words came forcibly to my mind:

"Was it for crimes that I have done,
He groan'd upon the tree?
Amazing pity! Grace unknown!
And love beyond degree!"

"With all those things before me, my soul was so strangely affected, that I at this time literally sunk to the ground with my heart dissolved in love and gratitude, and my eyes overflowing with tears. And surely if any one ever looked on Him whom he pierced, and mourned for him as one mourneth for his only son, I did at this time. As I now lay with my face on the ground, and with the whole scene still before my eyes, the following text came with power to my mind: 'Before whose eyes Jesus Christ hath been evidently set forth crucified among you.' (Gal. iii. 1.) I was amazed at all this; yes, my feeble mind was overpowered with what was before me, and I cried out and said, 'Is this that dear Saviour against whom I have so grievously sinned? Is this he from whom I have so deeply revolted? Is this he whom I have so shamefully slighted, neglected, and abused? Surely it is not he! It surely cannot be he! I could not have sinned against such a dear sufferer! How could I have acted so! I knew not that he was so glorious! I knew not what I was doing!' But something seemed to say, 'Yes, yes, yes; this is he, this is he, &c.'

"I was yet on the ground, and immortal love appeared before me in full blaze; and the suffering of Christ, and the heinous nature of sin never before appeared to me in such a point of light. I can no more describe to the full what, on this extraordinary occasion, were my feelings and views in the different objects in the vision, than I can make a world. I also would here observe, what is nothing but truth, namely, this whole vision, as I have here related it, was as palpable to my understanding, as ever was the sun at noon day to my natural sight; and the different objects which I then saw are not yet wholly estranged from my mind. The appearance of Christ's countenance, when hanging on the cross, with his eyes fixed on me, I expect never to lose sight of in this world, nor in the world to come. But I say, the feeling produced in my soul by the Saviour's look, I shall never be able to describe."

We must afford one more extract, and should be glad, did our limits admit it, to furnish two more,—one relating to the weaning time after these great consolations, and the other to his call to the ministry; but we feel that we have already exceeded our usual allowance:

"My heart and my thoughts and all my warm affections were constantly going out after the Lord, so that I knew no other God but the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and him I served and him I loved. Yes, 'I worshipped him in the Spirit, and rejoiced in Christ Jesus, and had no confidence in the flesh.' (Phil. iii. 3.) Every thing in the divine life was to me as real and plain as were the natural things round about me; and wonder I often did why I should be so indulged, and so strangely caressed as then I was. As I have already said, so I now say again: I, in those days, had no more question concerning the divine authenticity of the Scriptures, nor of the eternal divinity of the Son of God, nor of the distinct personality of the Father, Son, and Spirit, nor of the security of the Church of Christ, nor of the truth of the whole gospel system, nor of the reality of the teaching of the Holy Ghost, nor of my interest in all these things, than I now have of what is my proper name. Blessed teaching is this, and very widely it differed from what generally goes by the name of religion.

"By and by winter came on again; yet as before, so now, I visited my *Patmos*, where I still found my Lord and Saviour profusely kind to me; and although the fields and woods looked dreary, yet they were beautiful to me by the grace and the glory of God. Often while kneeling on the snow in prayer, or sitting down on roots or stumps, insensible of cold, my soul has been surcharged with the divine presence, and so drawn out to the Lord that I could scarcely see for the glory that shone about me. O! the arbours, and groves, and rural places where in prayer and in meditation my soul has drawn near unto the Lord! How sweet their memory still! 'The Lord delighteth in mercy,' (Micah vii. 18,) was a most precious word to my soul; it shone into my heart like a blazing sun, and there kindled a heavenly flame; for the voice of mercy to me at that time carried with it a peculiar sound, a sweet accent, and brought with it many endearments, well calculated to render me exceedingly happy. I would sometimes be led to think very soberly about what is commonly called religion; and also of what the religion of most professors seemed to amount to when closely looked into, and well compared with the inward teaching of the Holy Spirit: and I am free to confess before God and man that to me it appeared like froth upon the water. My views of this subject are now as they were then."

That we have been exceedingly interested in the work, and that we think highly of the author, we need hardly say, after the copious extracts we have given, and the passing remarks we have made. A few words may then suffice, by way of conclusion, more especially as the work is being reprinted in this country.

Our readers will have perceived, from the extracts given, that it is no common-place work, that the experience related in it is neither superficial nor suspicious, and that the author possesses considerable abilities in describing the exercises and consolations he has gone through.

Our feeling, if we dare allow any to his partial disparagement, is rather that it is *too good*. It seems so deep, so clear, so diversified, and so ably set forth in scripture language, that it almost looks like a copy of the experience and style of Huntington. But one thing, above all others, seems to preserve our author from this imputation—the account he has given of his dreadful backsliding and restoration. This seems to us to stamp it as genuine; for who, in a made-up experience, would confess to falling into sin, as our author has done? Huntington

certainly was not copied there; because, as is well known, he looked upon open backsliders with great suspicion.

We do not hesitate, therefore, to receive the work as genuine. Though, in our judgment, extremely well written, there is little appearance of any attempt at fine writing. The style is simple and clear, and the sentences seem to flow from his pen as freely as the thoughts from his mind, and the feelings from his heart. We have not, for a long time, read a book which can bear a comparison with it, either in the depth and variety of experience, or in the power and ability with which it is described. It is a clear and blessed testimony to the reality and power of vital godliness, and a decided witness against all creature religion. And we are glad that such a man lives in the United States, to preach, as we find he does, through a most extensive expanse of country, larger than half-a-dozen Englands; and that his writings have obtained a wide circulation and much acceptance among our new-born American brethren.

POETRY.

A ROUGH BUT RIGHT WAY.

<p>Oft have I tried, but, ah! in vain, To tread a path more smooth and plain; My flesh against the way will fight, 'Tis right to faith, but wrong to sight.</p> <p>The Lord knows well what way is best To lead to everlasting rest; Oft has he heard the mourner's cry, And saved the soul condemn'd to die.</p> <p>But will he hear my piteous case? And show to me a smiling face? O will he hear my sad complaints? And is my cry the cry of saints?</p> <p>I cannot trust, or love, or pray; I question all I do or say; I look for life, but oft feel dead, Yet pant for Christ, the living bread.</p> <p>London.</p>	<p>O could I find this absent God! Then would I kiss his chast'ning rod; Or, could I hear him whisper peace, Then would my mourning, crying cease.</p> <p>Dear Jesus, show thy matchless grace; O grant that I thy love may trace; In ev'ry troublous, darksome hour Make known to me thy mighty power.</p> <p>O what a rugged path I tread! My comforts gone; yes, all are fled; My way is rough, I scarce can move; Is this dark path the path of love?</p> <p>Where shall I rest my weary soul Whilst the fierce billows o'er me roll? When will my toil and suffering cease, And all within be joy and peace?</p> <p>A MOURNER.</p>
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TO A WATCHMAN ON THE WALLS.

<p>Dear Sir,—I've read your "Valiant Men," And find you mention nine or ten Whom I esteem and love, Believing they are men of God, Wash'd from their sins in Jesus' blood, Instructed from above.</p> <p>But fear that you stepp'd off the wall When some of them you gave a call To place among the rest; And believe, if you had left them out, There does not seem to be a doubt That most would like it best.</p> <p>By "beetles, bats, and owls of night, And creeping things of drony flight," I know not what you mean,</p> <p>Aug. 17, 1843.</p>	<p>Unless you mean the lame and blind, The poor and needy, and such kind, Whom some don't much esteem.</p> <p>Dear Sir, excuse what's said above; May you the same receive in love, Nor think I've said too much; And should you e'er take up your pen Again to write of valiant men, Be certain they are such.</p> <p>As your experience now is out I hope that we shall hear about When first God did you call; The work of grace upon your soul, How you were wounded, then made whole, And got upon the wall.</p> <p>JONATHAN.</p>
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NOTE.—The piece, A Few Words to "J. H.," by J. G., Chorley, refers to a piece inserted in Vol. VIII., not the present year.



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